

Exploring the Influence of Targeted Coaching
On Teachers' Planning and Instruction

by

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ABSTRACT

When it comes to planning for instruction, many teachers may feel an overwhelming need to rely on prescribed curricular resources and when those are not available many teachers may feel lost. While several methods for improving instructional planning exist, research has shown that prioritizing standards, creating assessments aligned to those standards, and using the data from those assessments to make instructional decisions have positively impacted teachers' instructional planning practices.

Grounded in participatory action research (PAR), this mixed methods action research study sought to investigate the influence that targeted coaching could have on teachers' planning practices. The study was conducted in a K-8 Title I school and included four participants who engaged in targeted coaching and professional development designed to help them improve their planning practices. It utilized surveys, observations, artifacts, and interviews to answer the research questions.

From the surveys, interviews, lesson plans, artifacts and coaching conversations, the Coaching Model for Effective Planning provided helpful and beneficial professional development that was readily adaptable and useful to the participants' classroom. In addition, the findings exhibited that coaching can influence planning whether formally by being written into lesson plans or by incorporating it into instruction. Furthermore, the findings also raised the question of teacher efficacy in coaching relationships as well as the impact of coaching.

DEDICATION

To young men of color who come from underprivileged backgrounds-- never let your circumstances dictate your expectations or define your life's situations. To my dad, William James Moore, a man who never saw the inside of high school or college classroom as a student--thank you for always reinforcing the importance of education in my life. May you continue to rest in peace.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Personal Experience

I began my career in education in 2007 as a member of a nonprofit organization that specializes in creating educational equity in public and charter schools throughout the United States. Having recently earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and International Studies prior to joining, I was completely oblivious to many of the traits that constitute effective teaching outside of my own perceptions. Shortly after I was accepted into this organization, I headed to Atlanta, Georgia for a five-week teacher preparation program. It was during this time that I was introduced to various frameworks, rubrics, and concepts that would help to shape many of the theories and practices that I would infuse into my teaching. While I was learning critical pieces of knowledge, I still lacked the ability to place it into practice. To remedy this gap in skill, I sought professional development opportunities in these areas from my school district. However, they proved to be broad and unspecific to my content area of social studies.

During the summer proceeding my second year of teaching, I engaged in an intensive process of professional development with a mentor and a cohort of middle school social studies teachers from schools across the metropolitan area. Together we focused on prioritizing our content standards, creating aligned assessments, and learning how to use the data from those assessments to target specific areas for instruction. By performing those tasks in such an intimate setting, my knowledge of those practices as well as my confidence in engaging in those practices tremendously increased. Consequently, I was able to enter my

second year of teaching with my first three units of instruction planned, including assessments and plans for how to use the results from the assessments depending on the students' performance. As I reflect on that time I often question, what caused my development in those three elements of effective planning?

The professional development I received during that summer was led by my mentor who was himself a former social studies teacher. He was also knowledgeable in terms of the steps necessary to prioritize standards, create aligned assessments, and use data from assessments to plan for instruction. Furthermore, this professional development was a shared experience with a small group of colleagues who were experiencing similar challenges. Because of our size, we were able to work together, and my mentor was able to coach us individually based on our level of understanding of these concepts. This memory of professional development in the form of targeted coaching is one that has remained prevalent throughout my teaching career.

Professional Experience

During the last 16 weeks of the 2010-2011 school year, I worked as an administrative intern under the principal of South Side Elementary School (SSES). It was in this capacity that he shared his philosophy of teaching and the vision he had for the school. Shortly after his arrival to SSES in July 2010, he met with the staff and discussed the behaviors he witnessed during his observations of teachers. The behaviors as he described were indicative of several factors, one being the lack of effective planning for instruction. He would often state, "I have teachers whose students control the classroom...for God's sakes get something in

front of them.” One could interpret this statement to allude to classroom management issues or even issues related to the delivery of instruction, and while classroom management and poor instruction may have played a role in his assessment, further conversations revealed that many of the teachers lacked a plan for their students’ learning. These subsequent conversations were based heavily on his belief that teachers did not know how to use data from aligned assessments to plan for instruction and that independent of prescribed curricular resources from the district or its endorsed programs, many teachers would have little to no understanding of how to prioritize content standards and create aligned assessments that would lead students to master objectives.

As we engaged in discourse around this topic, he extended me the opportunity to assist with colleagues who were in need of improving their instructional planning. Once again, this led me to recount my successful experiences with planning for instruction and reflect how my mentor’s coaching impacted my planning skills. After our conversation, I immediately began to contemplate the various methods I could use to work with my colleagues and the various strategies I could share. After all, many of the colleagues I would be working with could be potentially receiving professional development from other sources, and I did not want to risk being cumbersome or repetitive in my assistance. Also, I knew that I would have to be prepared for resistance and rejection. Having remembered what actions led to such a pivotal moment in improving my instructional planning, I wanted to start there. Could a targeted coaching model of professional development focused on prioritizing content

standards, creating aligned assessments, and using the data from those assessments to plan instruction positively impact teachers' planning?

School Context

South Side Elementary School (SSES) contains grades kindergarten through eighth and serves a population of approximately 950 students. SSES is located in central Arizona and is labeled as a Title I school. The students of SSES are taught by 31 teachers, 10 of which have taught there for at least five of the seven years SSES has been opened. The school is also led by an administrative team consisting of the following: a principal, one assistant principal, one school improvement specialist, and two reading facilitators. Initially, the arrival of an entirely new administrative team caused tension among staff as there was a division of staff who supported the new administration and those who did not. There was also tension between administration and staff. An example of this tension could be found in the rumors that a group of unidentified staff members regularly filed grievances against administration. Another example could be seen in the strong tone that the administration used to communicate directives and expectations. One administrator stated, "Your staff has a bad reputation and I believe it based on the way that some of you have addressed me." Another administrator stated, "We are going to hold you accountable and some of you may not like it..." During that school year two teachers resigned and three teachers were placed on administrative leave for undisclosed reasons.

Since it first opened in 2005, SSES has expanded significantly. In 2007, SSES completed construction of a new building of eight classrooms and four

bathrooms to service two grade levels. Less than three years later, SSES annexed its original building with a new wing consisting of seven classrooms, two bathrooms, and a courtyard. As the newest school in the Kennedy School District, SSES has undergone the most renovations of any other school in KSD, with the exception of two schools that have been rebuilt from the ground up. The newness and size of the facility originally made it a flagship school for district and community events. This has also led to more meticulous maintenance of the facility and its grounds, which consistently remains free of graffiti and vandalism.

At South Side Elementary School, approximately 67% of the student population receives free and reduced lunch. The school's ethnic composition is 56% Latino, followed by 30% African American, and 7% Caucasian. Also, 18% of the total student population is English Language Learners. SSES has obtained a "Performing" rating from the state's education accountability system, AZ Learns (Arizona Department of Education, 2008). AZ Learns awards points to schools based on the percentage of students who pass the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS), the state's standardized test. The points are based on improvement from the school's baseline assessment data. A school can obtain an underperforming, performing, performing plus, highly performing, or excelling rating, which is the highest rating (Arizona Department of Education, 2010).

SSES has not met its Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, which means that the school has failed to raise student achievement to the level set forth by NCLB. It is also under its second year of corrective action. With regard to the state's standardized tests scores in

reading, SSES has approximately 57% of the tested students passing. This is an increase of eight percent from the year 2007. Mathematics scores also increased by eight percent to demonstrate that 49% of the students tested are passing. While the academic gains of SSES may demonstrate an increase in student learning, the school's passing averages in Reading and Mathematics fall below the state and district averages (Arizona Department of Education, 2008). It is important to note that at beginning of the 2011-2012 academic year SSES became a Success For All (SFA) school. This new change to the curriculum was expected to bring new demands for the staff in terms of their instructional planning as class periods for other subjects were expected to be shorter. During the study, my role, in addition to the researcher, was that of the Success For All (SFA) Reading facilitator. The position directly engaged the teachers of SSES in various components of the SFA Program.

With regard to the Kennedy School District, the Staff Development Department primarily handles the professional development initiatives that occur at the district level. The department contains one director, who is in his third year of employment at KSD, two staff development coaches, one transitional teaching mentor, four new and evolving teacher mentors, and one technology integration specialist. Within the past school year, only three of the new and evolving teacher mentors have visited SSES for time periods of approximately one hour, and all of them came to see different teachers. Over the past school year, Staff Development began offering courses on a quarterly basis. As of August 2011, the courses that were being offered included the following: Microsoft Office I for Word, Power

Point, and Excel; DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Workshop for K-2, Smart Board Level I, Cornell Notes, AIMS Strategies for Instruction, Instructional Strategies for K-3 Teachers, and the use of Study Island, an interactive math and science-based web program aligned to state standards. Although the list of courses being offered may appear to be quite extensive, there appears to be a lack of courses designed to help teachers improve their instructional planning in the areas of prioritizing standards, creating assessments aligned to those standards, and using the data from those assessments to inform instruction. Consequently, this course of action developed out of the desire to investigate if the practices that worked for me in terms of improving my planning would also work for my colleagues.

This action research study was constructed based on the concepts of participatory action research (PAR). According to Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2007), “PAR involves examining an issue systematically from the perspectives and lived experiences of the community members most affected by the issue” (p.333). Furthermore, participatory action research begins with a shared experience that provides the basis for change (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008). My action research focused on improving instructional planning in a K-8 school through professional development in the form of targeted coaching which would occur during the academic year. While specific components of the professional development included a more traditional format, it is important to note these aspects of professional development can be just as successful as reform methods of professional development, such as a mentorship program, when taking place

over a lengthy period of time (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000). It was my vision that assisting a cohort of teachers in an, ongoing, specific, collaborative setting would help them improve their instructional planning. This study may be helpful for those who are currently seeking to improve their instructional planning by aligning assessments to standards and using the information from those assessments to plan instruction. This study sought to answer the following question:

In what ways does The Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP) influence teachers' planning practices?

Chapter 2 - Review of the Literature

Figure 1 provides a conceptual framework for the literature review. There are many arguments made by notable scholars as to what constitutes effective planning. One of those arguments suggest that effective planning is comprised of one's ability to prioritize standards, use those standards to create aligned assessments, and use the information gathered from those assessments to create a plan for further instruction. When viewing the conceptual framework, one should begin by viewing the concept of effective planning. Based on the directional signs, it would appear that effective planning is realized through the processes of prioritizing standards, creating aligned assessments, and using data from assessments to plan for instruction. Furthermore, one may also ponder how do these elements of effective planning come to fruition? A review of the literature highlights that these elements of planning can be developed through professional development, more specifically targeted coaching. Consequently, the directional signs leading to the elements of effective planning are grounded in the concepts of professional development and targeted coaching which subsequently leads to effective planning based on the conceptual framework.

It is important to mention that this is not the only interpretation of effective planning. Perhaps, one could argue that effective planning is the manner in which a teacher focuses on the methods within a given lesson or even that professional development is not the most effective method to improve instructional planning. For example, Mokhtari, Rosemary, and Edwards (2007), suggested the Data Analysis Framework for Instructional Decision Making

“provide{s} a rich data set for school teams to use in setting goals and devising action steps to improve...instruction” (p. 355). Based on this argument, effective planning can be achieved through the sole concept of using data from assessments to plan for further instruction.

Regardless of one’s position, there is literature to support the notion that effective planning is driven by a teacher’s ability to prioritize standards, create aligned assessments, and use the data from those assessments to plan for instruction (Dick, 1986; Mokhtari et al., 2007), and for teachers who lack those skills, professional development in the form of targeted coaching has yielded positive gains for teachers in those areas (Donegan, Ostrosky & Fowler, 2000).

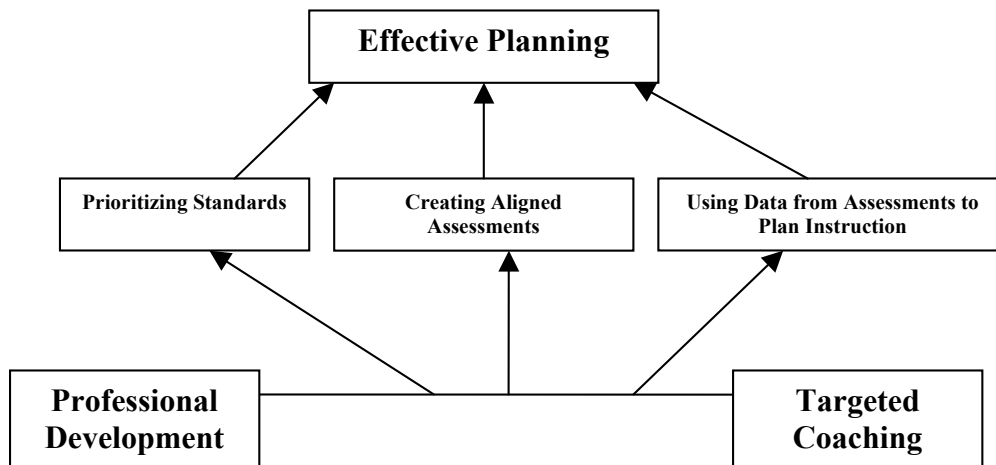


Figure 1. Targeted coaching with professional development

The review of the literature is structured based on the conceptual framework. It discusses each concept in the following order: effective planning,

prioritizing standards, creating aligned assessments, using data from assessments to plan for instruction, professional development, and targeted coaching. It was written in this way to first highlight the contextual problem of effective planning and then discuss the various manners through which this problem could be solved, finally leading to the proposed solution of professional development in the form of targeted coaching.

Effective Instructional Planning

Instructional planning is defined as the process by which teachers link the curriculum to student learning (Clark & Yinger, 1987). This process usually occurs outside of the execution of plans during teaching (Brown, 1988; Yinger, 1980). Before discussing effective instructional planning, one should consider how to assist teachers with instructional planning. Perhaps one place to begin is with assisting teachers in developing a vision for their classroom in terms of teacher and student success (Farr, 2010; Phelps, 2008). In order to develop this vision and see it to fruition, a teacher must possess the curricular and pedagogical foundation to plan for instruction (Farr, 2010). In terms of content and pedagogy, they should be given the opportunity to develop their weaknesses either with the assistance of another colleague or through professional development opportunities (Bencze, 2010; Sterling & Frazier, 2010). Also, planning for instruction can be aided through the process of collaboration. This can be done more intimately through grade level teams or even within a full staff (Angelides, 2002; Mouza, 2006).

The origins for effective instructional planning within education can be attributed to Tyler (1949). The Tylerian approach to instructional planning, which is also known as the “objectives-first approach,” is a linear model of planning that consists of organizing content, specifying objectives, and determining a means to evaluate student learning (Ball, Knobloch, & Hoop, 2007; Brown, 1988; Toomey, 1977). It is important to mention that other scholars trace the concept of effective instructional planning to the 1960s under what is termed the general systems approach (Dick, 1986). It was this method that not only equated effective planning with prioritized or hierarchical standards, but also with aligned assessments or criterion-referenced assessments (Dick, 1986; John, 2006). Furthermore, the rise of the general systems approach also saw the use of assessment results to provide teachers with information about how to plan for better instruction (Andrews & Goodson, 1980; Dick, 1986). This notion of teachers’ instructional planning being conceptualized by content goals continues to remain prevalent in many teachers’ classrooms (Harris, Hofer, Schmidt, Grandgenett, & Van Olphen, 2010).

When it comes to matters of effective instructional planning, its origins are not the only point of contention among scholars. In fact, many scholars debate over what methods actually constitute effective instructional planning. For example, teachers who identify and utilize activities, and later examine their impact on student learning could be coined as effective instructional planners (Eisner, 1967; Toomey, 1977). Leinhardt (1983) suggests that this method is effective because the activities are embedded in the teacher’s mind and as a result,

they require less time in the planning process. This activity-based model of instructional planning has led to the modern interpretation of “interactional planning” which focuses on the pupils’ interaction within the methods of a lesson more than the objective itself (John, 2006).

Although there is a debate as what constitutes effective elements of instructional planning, it is clear that the various components of the systems-based approach do yield positive rewards for teachers in their planning. In a 2002 study conducted in Illinois, 15 novice teachers were examined through the lens of their instructional planning. The researchers concluded that the teachers who were effective initially began their planning by prioritizing content. However, their specific contexts may have prevented them from utilizing the systems-based approach to instructional planning in its entirety (Ball et al., 2007).

Prioritizing Standards

Standards are a mechanism for assisting educators in focusing on planning curriculum and instruction (Ainsworth, 2003a; Stein, Carnine, & Dixon, 1998). The state of Arizona has declared that every school within the state will implement a curriculum aligned to the state standards. Furthermore, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) has compiled a blueprint of the knowledge and skills that students within the state need to be successful in approximately ten content areas including reading, writing, social studies, mathematics, and science (Arizona Department of Education, 2010). When evaluating the importance of standards, one can look to the mandates given by the ADE as one reason why standards are important in planning for instruction.

According to Ainsworth (2003a), "... [Prioritized standards] are derived from a systematic and balanced approach to distinguishing which standards are absolutely essential for student success..." (p. 2). Once students have mastered these standards, they should be able to transfer the knowledge and skills to other areas of the curriculum (Childre, Sands & Pope, 2009). As a result, prioritizing standards is not a method for eliminating standards, but rather managing them in a way to help teachers improve their instructional planning (Ainsworth 2003a; Reeves, 2004). Furthermore, the need to assist teachers in the practice of prioritizing standards has developed out of the inadequacy of textbooks and state standards to explicitly highlight key concepts for instruction (Childre et al., 2009; McTighe & Thomas, 2003).

In his work *Unwrapping the Standards: A Simple Process to Make Standards Manageable*, Ainsworth (2003b) outlines a process for determining which standards should be a priority. First teachers should choose a familiar standard and its indicators to unwrap. Ainsworth (2003b) defines standards as what students generally need to know and be able to do; indicators are considered the grade specific learning outcomes in terms of what students need to know and be able to do. Ainsworth (2003b) argues, "There is no right way to 'unwrap' standards in terms of organization and format" (p.21). Consequently teachers can engage other colleagues in this process. Secondly, teachers should "...underline the key concepts...and circle the skills..." (p.6). Key concepts are usually phrased as nouns or noun phrases, while the skills are verbs or actions (Ainsworth, 2003b). Third, teachers should organize the standards and indicators in a format

most useful for them, such as a concept map (Ainsworth, 2003b). Lastly, teachers should develop topics or contexts for their prioritized standards. This usually refers to assessments, lessons, activities, or units of instruction (Ainsworth, 2003b; Childre et al., 2009; Hendrickson, 2006; McTighe & Thomas, 2003; Stein et al., 1998). After teachers have essentially prioritized and organized the standards, they can check with colleagues to determine if they would in fact choose the identical concepts and skills (Ainsworth, 2003b). Although many state standards do not give teachers an accurate picture of what should be taught (Heritage, 2007), a clear framework for planning and prioritizing the academic standards that should be taught is imperative for creating aligned assessments (Stiggins, 2008). Figure 2 illustrates a framework for prioritizing standards.

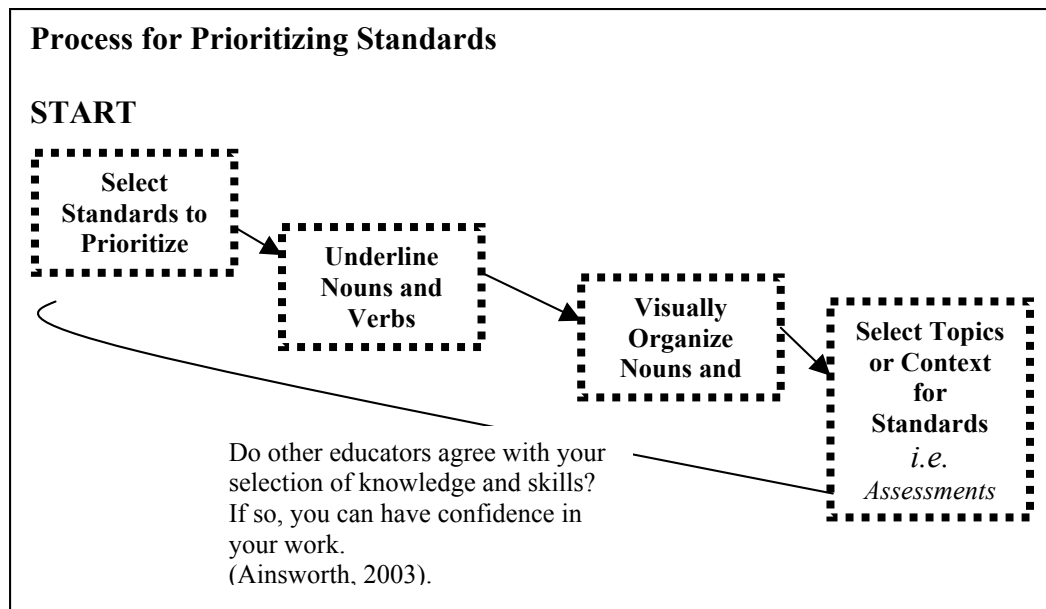


Figure 2. Process for prioritizing standards. Adapted from *Unwrapping the Standards: A Simple Process to Make Standards Manageable* by L. Ainsworth (2003).

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are an ongoing systematic approach used to gather information about student learning in order to provide specific feedback during the course of instruction (Heritage, 2007; Heritage, Kim, Vendlinski, & Herman, 2009; Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). Cauley and McMillan (2010) further explicate the definition of formative assessments by adding that it is a planned process by which teachers absorb data surrounding their students' performance and use that information to increase student outcomes. Therefore, in order for an assessment to be formative, it must close a gap in skill or knowledge (Ayala, Shavelson, Ruiz-Primo, Brandon, Yin, Furtak, & Young 2008; Heritage et al., 2009) and teachers should be able to use the information collected from the assessment to make immediate adjustments to improve student achievement (Dorn, 2010). There are currently three levels at which formative assessments are administered: classroom, school, and institutional. Teachers are generally more involved in formative assessments at the classroom level (Stiggins, 2008; Stiggins & DuFour, 2009).

Formative assessments have five elements that teachers should know and understand. The first element is that teachers must have a solid commitment to standards-based instruction (Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). This would imply that teachers have prioritized their standards and planned their instruction accordingly. The second element is that teachers should develop and provide clear learning targets which are manageable to achieve in the classroom setting, and these targets should be mastered by the teachers (Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). Clear

learning targets are imperative because students are most effective when they have a clear vision of what is expected of them (Cauley & McMillan, 2010). The next element is for teachers to identify the gap in their students' achievement. Once this gap is identified, teachers should plan to adjust their instruction to close the achievement gap (Heritage, 2007). The fourth element is that teachers must provide feedback that is timely and understandable (Cauley & McMillan, 2010; Heritage, 2007; Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). The last element is that formative assessments must involve students. When students are able to collaborate with their teachers in order to monitor their progress, they are also able to develop personal strategies that hold them accountable for their personal academic achievement (Cauley & McMillan, 2010; Heritage, 2007). Because the opportunities for teachers to develop strong assessment practices are rare (Stiggins, 2008), perhaps professional development in the form of targeted coaching focused on improving instructional planning could prove to be beneficial to a school driven by the power of formative assessments and for teachers who may be unfamiliar with the elements of effective formative assessments, including how to use the results of formative assessments to plan for instruction.

Using Student Outcomes to Plan Instruction

School organizations have the capacity to mold the ways in which teachers use data to inform instruction. Young (2006) states, "Leadership focused on data use-or agenda setting-affects teachers' impetus for using data and correspondingly loosens or tightens the connections between data-driven rhetoric and teachers data

practices” (p.532). Consequently, if schools are focused on effective instructional planning, which may be interpreted as a teacher’s ability to use data to plan instruction (Biggs, 2010; Poplin, Rivera, Durish, Hoff, Kawell, Pawlak, Soto, Strauss, & Veney, 2011; Wetzler, 2010), then schools will work to ensure that teachers not only have access to student achievement data, but also possess the ability to organize and interpret student achievement data for the purpose of improving student achievement (Parr & Timperley, 2008).

Many scholars have discussed the need to provide professional development for teachers in order to improve the practice of using student achievement data to plan instruction. In “Teachers, Schools, and Using Evidence: Considerations of Preparedness”, Parr and Timperley (2008) conducted a study that measured teachers’ knowledge of the use of student achievement data in a professional development project. One discovery led to the determination that when teachers have student achievement data, they are able to make adjustments in their practice in order to increase student achievement. However, in order for evidence-informed decision making to occur, teachers need to have content mastery from the perspective of teaching it (Parr & Timperley, 2008; Meyen & Greer, 2009).

In order for teachers to gain this skill, they will need to undergo professional development that targets gathering and interpreting data in various forms such as charts and graphs (Henning, 2006; Parr & Timperly, 2008) and using data to plan instruction (Parr & Timperly, 2008). It is also important that the professional development is ongoing, meaning that it occurs at least monthly

(Hamilton, Halverson, Jackson, Mandinach, Supovitz, & Wayman, 2009; Wayman, 2005) and is conducted with minimal participants (Wayman, 2005). This should allow the facilitator to engage with participants in a more needs-specific manner according to their level of ability. The discourse surrounding the three elements of effective instructional planning yields to the notion of professional development as a mechanism for improving one's ability to prioritize standards, create aligned assessments, and use data from assessments to plan for instruction.

Professional Development

When pondering the selection of professional development as the vehicle to improve instructional planning, it is possible to argue that effective professional development meets the individual and specific needs of adult learners and allows them to close the gaps in their knowledge and skill in order to increase student learning (Speck & Knipe, 2005). The question then becomes, how does one design effective professional development to meet the diverse needs of adult learners?

When designing effective professional development one must question whether the activity will be traditional, such as a workshop, or will it have a reform approach such as study group or mentorship and coaching component. This is imperative because reform methods of professional development have been reported to yield significant gains in improving teachers' planning and preparation for instruction (Birman, Desimone, Garet & Porter, 2000; Rhoton & Stiles, 2002). For example, a study conducted by Quick, Holtzman, and Chaney

(2009) revealed that participants who experienced a mentorship or coaching form of professional development demonstrated increased amounts of higher-level meaning of content. This example highlights the notion that reform-based methods of professional development can have a positive impact on teachers' growth. Furthermore, Yeo, Ang, Chong, Huan, and Quek (2008) contend that effective teachers plan instruction to fit their students' needs and in order for that level to remain high, "... [Teachers need] ongoing support" (p. 202). The idea of ongoing support would be in contrast to traditional methods of professional development, such as a one-time workshop and would also give credence to the notion that professional development should be continual (Polk, 2006).

Professional development that occurs over a period of time allows teachers to deepen their level of engagement while learning actively (Birman et al, 2000; Fifield & Kedzior, 2004; Rhoton & Stiles, 2000). Also by designing professional development that occurs over a period of time, it provides several opportunities for feedback and coaching (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2003). Because participants are an essential component of the effective professional development structure, the activity should provide them with specific knowledge and resources that are readily adaptable to their work (Fifield & Kedzior, 2004; Rhoton & Stiles, 2000). By engaging participants as the focus of the professional development activity, it enables and empowers them to discuss concepts and problems while simultaneously giving them the opportunity to incorporate their new found knowledge and resources into their planning for instruction (Birman et al, 2000; Cohen, Hill, & Kennedy, 2002). According to

Kohler, Crilley, & Shearer (2001), unlike traditional methods of collaborative professional development, peer coaching is designed for teachers to learn and perfect new behaviors.

Targeted Coaching

Over 30 years ago, peer coaching surfaced as a site-based method for teachers to engage in professional development (Slater & Simmons, 2001; Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen, and Bolhuis, 2007). Peer coaching is defined as the confidential process in which two or more colleagues work together to reflect on current practices that lead to the expansion, refinement, and building of new skills while sharing ideas, conducting action research, or problem solving (Robbins, 1995; Slater & Simmons, 2001).

Within the concept of peer coaching is that of expert coaching in which specially trained teachers who possess expertise in a particular method observe, support, and provide feedback to other teachers (Swafford, 1998). It is important to note that peer coaching has widely been interpreted as a successful strategy of professional development (Swafford, 1998; Slater & Simmons, 2001; Goker, 2006). The success of a peer coaching program can be determined by the level of trust that exist between the coach and the teacher (Slater & Simmons, 2001), the ability of the coach to provide technical, emotional, and reflective support (Swafford, 1998), and the flexibility of the peer coaching (Slater & Simmons, 2001; Zwart et al., 2007). On the other hand, failures of peer coaching can be seen when a peer coach is unable to effectively communicate or build a rapport with the teacher being coached (Bruce & Ross, 2008). Failures of peer coaching are

also evident in matters where this model of professional development is used for evaluative purposes (Slater & Simmons, 2001). If peer coaching is going to be effective, it should seek to intertwine the peer coaching process with content specific pedagogy training that can be readily applied within the teacher's classroom (Bruce & Ross, 2008; Goker, 2005; Swafford, 1998; Zwart et al., 2009).

Chapter 3 - Innovation

This innovation was based on the need to assist teachers in becoming more effective instructional planners. The innovation, which used a hybrid method of traditional and reform-based professional development, was meant to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills to better plan lessons for instruction. The goal of this innovation was to provide teachers with high-quality coaching and mentoring that was relevant and specific to their needs in terms of planning for instruction where it may not otherwise exist.

Many scholars contend that teachers may need assistance in prioritizing standards, creating assessments aligned to those standards, and using data from those assessments to plan academic instruction (McTighe & Thomas, 2003; McTighe & Wiggins, 2004). For teachers who need such assistance, professional development is a logical resource that can help them improve those practices (Hanson, Burton, & Guam, 2006; Loeb, Knapp, & Elfers, 2008). Furthermore, professional development that encompasses a coaching component can be a vital tool for helping educators alter their practices (Easton, 2008). At the time of the innovation, the Kennedy School District and South Side Elementary School did not offer professional development specifically in the aforementioned areas. Therefore, the rationale was that within SSES existed the need for professional development, more specifically targeted coaching, designed to help teachers improve their instructional planning.

Before designing a professional development activity an individual should begin with a framework that demonstrates conscious goal-setting, planning,

action, and reflection based on the desired outcomes of the activity (Rhoton & Stiles, 2000). Figure 3 conceptually demonstrates this professional development design process. First, there is the goal-setting phase. During this phase it is important to consider what participants should gain from the professional development activity. This action leads to the planning of the activity or what strategies will be employed to help participants achieve those goals. After planning of the activity, the implementation of the professional development should occur. At the conclusion of the professional development activity the participants should reflect. Reflection serves as the point in which the participants evaluate the professional development, their use of the professional development, and the results of their effort to incorporate the professional development into their planning.

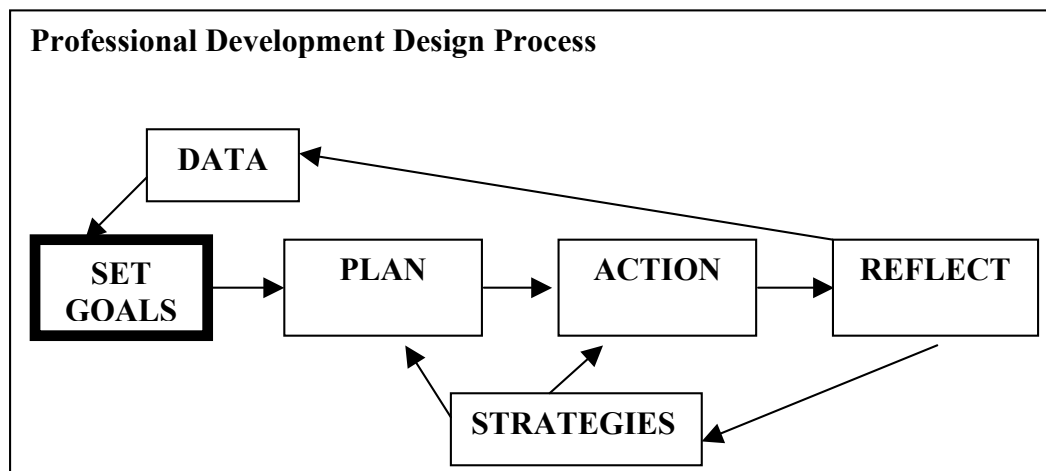


Figure 3. Professional Development Design Process Model. Adapted from *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of Science and Mathematics* by S. Loucks-Horsley, P.W. Hewson, N. Love, and K.E. Stiles, (1998).

The innovation, which was termed The Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP), was constructed based on the Professional Development Design Process. What separates this innovation from traditional forms of professional development is the coaching component. Quite often traditional forms of professional development, such as workshops, provide isolated training experiences. These experiences also lack follow up and alignment to the teacher's needs. On the other hand, when it comes to matters of coaching, there is usually a lack of human resources to provide mentors or local experts to deliver the support necessary for teachers to apply the newly learned knowledge and skill (Schlager & Fusco, 2003). As a result, teachers may report a loss in skill from lack of frequent engagement with the newly acquired knowledge and skill (Zhao & Bryant, 2007). The Professional Development Design Process guided the structuring of the CMEP to meet the specific needs of each participant through goals that were achieved through a personalized process of coaching.

The CMEP was based on the need to improve the instructional planning of teachers within the South Side Elementary School through a combination of traditional and reform professional development mechanisms. The purpose of the innovation was to build the capacity of the teachers in terms of instructional planning. The intent of the innovation was to provide knowledge around the previously mentioned concept through a more traditional model of professional development, such as a lecture. This method of development was complimented by targeted coaching, which permitted the local expert to work individually and specifically with the participants to increase their skills. The CMEP was also

framed by the Kennedy School District curriculum and several pieces of scholarly sources, such as *Understanding by Design Professional Development Workbook* (McTighe & Wiggins, 2004), and *Power Standards* (Ainsworth, 2003a), due to the resources they provide in terms of coaching the development of the participants.

Plan of Action

The Coaching Model for Effective Planning occurred over a span of 15 weeks, beginning in September of 2011 and concluding in January 2012. The innovation was implemented at South Side Elementary School which was previously described in the introduction. In September, the second grade teachers attended a professional development workshop which lasted for two hours. During this meeting the participants were introduced to the foundational elements of effective planning through a Microsoft Power Point presentation (Appendix A). In addition to this topic, the goals, expectations, and schedule for the innovation were also discussed. The professional development workshop was presented in three sections, the first being the introduction to the study. The second section consisted of material relating to prioritizing standards. The information gathered in this section was essential for ensuring the participants were aware of the content that they would teach throughout the course of the year. The third section focused the participants' efforts on creating aligned assessments and using data from those assessments to plan instruction.

The role of the researcher was to serve as both the facilitator and participant throughout the innovation. As the facilitator, I planned and delivered

training to ensure that the objectives of the CMEP were being met. As the participant, I worked collaboratively with the other participants to ensure that each one was able to readily apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills into their planning practices. Lastly, my ultimate goal was to build a sense of community among my colleagues and help them develop their planning and instructional practices in a meaningful and sustainable manner.

In order to personalize the participants' experience during the innovation, an initial needs assessment was conducted in the form of a survey and an interview. This information also served the purpose of informing the level of coaching that each participant required.

During the third and fourth week of September 2011, the participants received, completed, and submitted the pre-test survey. Beginning the fourth week in October, the participants were observed and had been given feedback on their lesson plans. The length of time between the collection of the pre-test survey data and observations was caused by the school district's calendar as well as the days spent out of the office by the researcher due to professional responsibilities. By the end of the November the coaching sessions were underway. Each coaching session began with the participants highlighting their areas of growth and stating which element of effective planning they would like to explore. Each coaching session was held in the participants' classroom during a time when they were not instructing. The expected outcome of the coaching sessions was to have participants engage in planning practices that would improve their instruction by examining and revising their lesson plans through the lens of prioritized

standards, aligned assessments, and a planning for how to use the assessment results to further instruction. Each coaching session concluded with the participant reflecting on their strengths, weaknesses, coaching needs, and any other resources they needed to be successful. The participants continued the targeted coaching sessions at a frequency of five times, with the goal of producing lesson plans with prioritized standards, an aligned assessment, and a plan for how to use the assessment results to further instruction. Also the coaching session yielded two to three action steps the participants would implement in order to improve personal areas of growth.

Chapter 4 - Method

In order to effectively answer the research questions through the action research process, a participatory action research study inclusive of a mixed-methods research design was conducted. There are three essential characteristics of action research. First action research involves the participants throughout the research process. Second, action research helps the participants develop new capacities. Lastly, action research seeks to change the behaviors of groups and individuals through the collaborative development of solutions to positively impact the context of the participants (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008; Stringer, 2007). Similar to traditional action research, participatory action research (PAR) seeks to help participants within a particular context become more aware of problems that prevent them from fully engaging in their communities, and it enables them to take action within that context to generate change (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007).

The participatory action research process can best be described as a cycle involving four components: participant's agenda, self-reflection, shared criteria for validity, and creation of knowledge and understanding, all of which involve the participants (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007). First, one must consider the agenda of the participants. While the goal of PAR is to solve a communal problem, a researcher must also be sensitive to the participants and their well-being (Stringer, 2007). Participants within participatory action research are collaborators within the same community who have a vested interest in creating change. Consequently the researcher investigates *with* the participants as opposed

to *on* the participants (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008; Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007). In this context, the researcher is considered to be a local expert who is working with co-researchers to find solutions to their communal problem (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007; Stringer, 2007). Next, there is the process of self-reflection. As part of the participatory action research process, the researcher must be involved in the lives of the participants. He must engage in open and critical dialogue with the participants in an attempt to understand the purpose behind their thoughts and actions (Kidd & Kral, 2005). Although the PAR self-reflection component involves planning change, acting during the process, and pondering consequences of change, the success of the PAR will be determined by participants' ability to understand and articulate how they have developed as opposed to their ability to follow the pre-determined steps in the action research process (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007).

The third component of participatory action research focuses on the shared validity of the study. PAR should generate a positive solution to a communal problem. When this occurs, it is called outcome validity. PAR should also ensure that participants are actively engaged throughout the action research process. This measure is called process validity, and it is directly linked to the researcher's relationship with the participants (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008). One of the primary methods a researcher can employ to ensure validity is triangulation (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007). Triangulation involves the use of multiple data sources to answer research questions (Stinger, 2007). Lastly participatory action research should generate shared knowledge. The shared knowledge of the

participants will not only determine if the PAR process is followed, but what changes occurred as a result of the action. As a result, the researcher must remain cognizant of engaging the participants or co-researchers in meaningful dialogue about the collection of data, the analysis of data, and the conclusions drawn from the data (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007). Table 2 depicts the PAR design of this study.

As previously stated, this participatory action research study employed an integrated mixed-methods research design to answer the aforementioned research question. Although traditional mixed-methods research designs use both qualitative and quantitative methods to generate data in a study (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009), an integrated mixed-methods design uses the participants, data collection tools, the results from the data, and the data analysis portions of the study to interact or respond to the same phenomenon, thus providing a more complete picture of the concept being examined (Greene, 2007). One of the primary purposes for using an integrated mixed-methods design is complementarity. Complementarity utilizes various methods to enhance and elaborate upon the results yielded from the study (Gay et al., 2009; Greene, 2007).

Participatory Action Research Process	Researcher	Participants
Participants Agenda	Member in the same community as the participants	<i>Shared community in which there is a common problem</i>
Self-Reflection	Facilitate conversations about strengths, areas for growth, and personal goals for improvement	<i>Reflect and Discuss strengths and areas for growth. Also set personal goals for improvement</i>
Shared Validity	Plan and engage participants in targeted professional development.	<i>Willingness to engage in targeted professional development and implements new knowledge and skills</i>
Shared Knowledge	Analyze the results of the data and determine its impact on the knowledge and skills of the participants.	<i>Analyze the results of the data and determine its impact on the knowledge and skills gained</i>

Figure 4. Participatory Action Research Design

According to Greene (2007), integrated mixed-methods studies designed for the purpose of complementarity seek, "...broader, deeper, and more comprehensive social understandings by using different methods that tap into different facets...of the same complex phenomenon" (p. 101). An example of an integrated mixed-methods approach driven by complementarity is blending. In this form of integrated mixed-methods, each method is weighed equally and implemented concurrently to avoid a change in the phenomena being explored (Greene, 2007). Consequently, each phase of the integrated mixed-methods

methodology including the participants, instruments, results, and analysis, was treated as equally important components that contribute to the integrity and validity of the participatory action research study. This action research study sought to answer the following question:

In what ways does The Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP) influence teachers' planning practices?

Participants

At the onset of this action research study, I was employed at South Side Elementary School in the Kennedy School District for five years: four years as the seventh grade social studies teacher and one year as the Success For All (SFA) Facilitator. As the SFA Facilitator, the responsibilities included working with teachers in grades one through eight to assist them in planning and implementing the various components of the SFA Reading Program. Fortunately, the roles I had during the study aligned closely with my professional responsibilities in terms of coaching teachers and providing feedback on their instruction. As a researcher and local expert, my tasks were to introduce effective planning strategies to the participants, collect and analyze data, and ultimately report the findings and implications.

In addition to myself, the study consisted of four participants each of whom taught second grade. This grade level team was selected based on their desire to improve their planning and their desire to participate in the study. Each of the participants had taught at SSES for at least six years.

Data Sources and Collection

Because this was a participatory action research study inclusive of an integrated mixed-methods design, the data collection instruments, the results yielded from the data, the analysis of the data, and the participants each played a pivotal role during the investigative process. There were multiple data sources used in this action research project. The sources included the following: surveys, interviews, artifacts, observations, coaching session, research journal, and analytic memos.

Pre-post instruments. The Peer Coaching and Professional Development Survey (Appendix B) was administered during the study as a pre/post test. The survey consisted of 21 structured items, three short response items, and seven demographic items. The structured items were based on a five point range on a Likert scale from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. The structured response items measured four dimensions: prioritizing standard, using data to plan for instruction, professional development, and peer coaching. This instrument was selected because surveys represent a powerful resource for gathering the thoughts and opinions of a specific population (Gay et al., 2009).

Each participant gave two interviews during the study (Appendix C). The interview protocol contained seven semi-structured interview questions meant to gather information about the participant's perception of their involvement within the innovation as it relates to their development and its impact on their planning practices. Each interview was audio recorded.

Artifacts. Artifacts were also collected throughout this action research study. Stringer (2007) wrote, “Researchers can obtain a great deal of significant information by reviewing documents and records” (p.77). The first set of artifacts that was collected were the participants’ responses to questions administered throughout the professional development workshop in September. Appendix D provides an exemplar response for the questions that were administered to the participants. The second set of artifacts that were collected was the participants’ lesson plans. These were submitted weekly by the grade level chairperson a total of six times. Feedback on the lesson plans was then provided within 48 hours electronically in Microsoft Word through comments embedded within the lesson plans.

Observations. Observations allow a researcher to build a holistic perspective of the participants’ environment while developing an understanding of the manner in which they conduct their normal activities (Stringer, 2007). Consequently, planned observations occurred throughout the study. After the participants’ lesson plans were reviewed, each participant was observed, for a total six times. The observations were documented using the Observation Anecdotal Record (Gonzalez, 2010) which can be found in Appendix E. By using the record form, the following information was able to be documented: date of the observation, length of the observation, number of students present during the observation as well as a running account of significant events occurring throughout the lesson. There was also a place to document supporting evidence related to the observation notes, such as student achievement trackers.

Accompanying the Observation Anecdotal Record was the Instructional Observation Rubric (Appendix F). Throughout each observation, the participants were rated on the rubric based on the data collected. The rubric consisted of seven concepts aligned to the pre-test survey. Each concept was then rated primary, intermediate, or advanced, based upon the data collected.

Peer coaching conversations. Each participant took part in three peer coaching conversations. The peer coaching conversations were guided by the Peer Coaching Reflective Guide (Appendix G). These conversations sought to elicit the participants' perspectives regarding their area of focus. The conversations were also documented using the Peer Coaching Reflective Guide. During the conversation, the researcher took notes of the most important concepts being discussed to help narrow the focus of the coaching session. The seven concepts that were discussed were directly aligned to the Instructional Observation Rubric. The goal of each conversation was to engage the participants' in dialogue surrounding their instructional planning and the results those practices yielded in their instruction. They also inquired about their opinion on the impact of the targeted coaching on their instructional planning. For that reason, it was imperative to discuss areas of strengths and weaknesses and develop meaningful and workable action plans during these conversations. The peer coaching conversations combined with the artifacts and the professional development exit slips provided a valuable method for gathering complimentary data and for clarifying various aspects of the observations (Gay et al., 2009).

Research journal and analytic memos. Nearly each time an action occurred related to the innovation it was documented in a journal. The research journal was kept in a Microsoft Word document by date. These journal entries contained information such as how instruments were administered and the thoughts and emotions of the researcher at various points in the innovation. In addition to the research journal, analytic memos were also recorded during the data analysis phase of research. These memos documented the various processes and stages that occurred during the analysis of data. Both analytic memos and research journals are helpful sources of information especially when documenting the thoughts and feelings of the researcher throughout the study (Gay et al., 2009; Stringer, 2007).

Data Analysis

As previously described, this was an integrated mixed-methods action research study. Consequently, the data analysis process was an integral part of the methodology. Furthermore, because the nature of mixed-methods research involves the collection of multiple data sources to examine the same phenomena (Greene, 2007), it was important to ensure that the analysis of the data was conducted in such a way as to maintain validity. The method I utilized was that of triangulation, which involves the use of the two or more methodological methods to verify the construction and existence of themes across a spectrum of data sources (Gay et al., 2009; Greene, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The research question was answered through the data collection instruments administered. The data that was yielded from the implementation of

the instruments was translated into quantitative and qualitative sources of information, which were then analyzed. Table 1 represents a visual of how each data source played a role in answering the research question.

Quantitative data analysis. Quantitative data that was yielded primarily from the pre/post test was entered into a Microsoft excel spreadsheet. The data was then imported into the 20th version of IBM’s Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 2012). I then computed the range of the data to determine if there were any errors or missing values. In this case there were no missing values.

Table 1

Data Collection Methods Related to Research Questions

Research Questions and Factors	Pre/Post Survey Interview	Artifacts	Peer Coaching Conversations	Analytic Memo & Research Journal
RQ1: In what ways does The Coaching and Development Model for Effective Planning influence teachers’ planning practices?	X	X	X	X

Next a reliability analysis (Revelle & Zinbarg, 2009) was constructed on the survey and each of the constructs to determine the Alpha Coefficient, or the Cronbach’s Alpha (Cronbach, 1951). The constructs contained within the Instructional Practice and Professional Development survey included: (1) professional development, (2) prioritizing standards, (3) peer coaching, (4) using data from assessments to inform instruction. An alpha level of 0.70 is commonly used as a cut score to determine the reliability of an instrument’s results, and it

was used in this study as well (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005; Nunnally, 1978). After conducting a reliability analysis on the survey instruments, the next step for the quantitative data analysis was to capture descriptive statistics for the instruments and constructs, such as the mean and standard deviation (Gay et al., 2009).

Qualitative data analysis. All qualitative data sources including the interviews, the artifacts, and the survey instruments were analyzed to identify and construct themes. The open-ended responses from the survey items were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and grouped into categories using the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Using this method I analyzed and open-coded first level data to construct categories. I then conducted a subsequent analysis, or axial coding, to minimize the first level data and construct more concrete categories and subcategories (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Glaser, 1992).

With regard to the interviews, each one was recorded and transcribed using HyperResearch. For the interviews and artifacts, I then entered the qualitative data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and engaged in the data analysis process outlined for the open-ended survey response items. The only exception is that for the interviews, I solicited the help of the participants to confirm first level codes (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Credibility of the Findings. As part of the mixed-method design of this study, I used the collected data to support, compliment, and help confirm my findings and assertions (Greene, 2007). I also employed a methodological triangulation validation procedure to confirm whether or not my research question

could be answered by the multiple data sources in a similar manner (Denzin, 1978; Padgett, Mathew & Conte, 2004). This procedure was inclusive of member checks, an audit trail of data sources, and triangulation.

The member checks were done after the initial draft of case studies was completed. To ensure credibility of the results, I reviewed the case studies with the participants. The participants agreed there was 100% accuracy to the themes I constructed based on the written and oral replies. In addition to this step, I maintained records of all raw data, anecdotal records, and other documents to create an audit trail. I also carefully documented the steps in my data analysis to explain every deduction made during the process of this action research. In doing this, the goal was to ensure that I would be as unbiased as possible in the data collection and data analysis of my action research.

This chapter included a detailed discussion of my mixed methods action research, the data that resulted from it, and its applicability to my research question. As previously mentioned, in addition to triangulating my data, I also discussed the credibility of my qualitative data. In the following chapter, I will discuss the results and interpretations that my action research yielded based on the data that was collected.

Chapter 5 - Results and Interpretations

The results of this action study will be communicated through the methodological approach of case studies. Case studies ensure that an issue is not explored simply through one lens, but through a variety of lenses that allow for a multi-faceted perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Although many types of case studies exist, this study utilized descriptive case study which are typically used to describe an innovation and the context in which it took place (Yin, 2003). The results from this study were formulated to answer the following the question:

In what ways does The Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP) influence teachers' planning practices?

This action research study was conducted at South Side Elementary School (SSES), a kindergarten through eighth grade Title I school. As previously mentioned SSES adopted the Success For All (SFA) Reading Program in 2011. SFA is a nonprofit organization that seeks to improve schools at every level through their research based models in reading and mathematics instruction (SFA, 2012). SSES currently operates the following four components of the SFA Reading Program: Kinder Corner and Kinder Roots, which is a year-round program for kindergarten students; Roots, which is typically for students in first and second grade; Wings for students in grades two through five; and Edge for students in grades six through eight. At the start of the school year, each of the participants started as teachers in the Roots Component. However, as students began advancing in their reading levels and testing out of the Roots Component, each of the participants became teachers in the Wings Component, with the

exception of one, to maintain the capacity of teachers to students in each component. Because the Kinder Components of SFA are year-round, SSES has two blocks of SFA instruction. Roots and Wings share the first 90 minute block from 8:45AM to 10:15AM. Edge is a 70 minute black of instruction from 10:45AM to 11:55AM. This shift in the instructional day has greatly impacted the amount of time teachers have to spend on other subject areas. For example, Mathematics and Language Arts are the two largest blocks of time with anywhere from 50 to 85 minutes depending on the grade level and Social Studies and Science with anywhere from 30 to 75 minutes of instruction depending on the grade level.

Regarding professional development at SSES and the Kennedy School District (KSD), one can review the previous section labeled “School Context”. As an SFA School, SSES has benefited greatly from professional development provided by the SFA Foundation and the two school based facilitators. While professional development in this area is frequent and robust in content, it is limited to practices in SFA. The SFA facilitators would argue that many of the best practices during SFA instruction could transfer across the curriculum. Nevertheless, when it comes to professional development in the three areas of effective planning, KSD or SESS do not offer professional development that specially addresses this area. The KSD Department of Staff Development does publish a monthly schedule of classes that teachers can take to improve their knowledge and skills. The course topics range from SmartBoard Training to Increasing Student Engagement in the Content Areas.

This study was designed to investigate the various ways in which targeted coaching would influence the planning practices of four teachers and how those planning practices would subsequently influence their instruction. In addition to the researcher, four participants engaged in the study. Figure 5 shows the demographic traits that correspond to each participant. The information that follows is a brief narrative of that demographic data.

Participant Context Information

Kitty began her teaching career at the South Side Elementary School in 2004 as a student teacher. She was then hired as a full-time teacher, where she has been teaching for the last seven years. Kitty identifies herself as a Hispanic female and holds a Master's Degree in Education; she is the first person in her family to earn a Bachelor's Degree as well as a graduate degree. Kitty began teaching Roots during SFA, but became a Wings teacher during the third quarter of the school year.

Caroline, a travel agent in her first career, began teaching at South Side Elementary School in 2005. Her entire career in education has encompassed her teaching second grade at SSES, where she has consistently held the title of "Grade Level Chair". Caroline, who earned her Master's Degree in Educational Administration in 2011, identifies herself as a Caucasian female and is a second generation colleague graduate. She creates the English Language lesson plans for the grade level. Caroline has been a Roots teacher during SFA throughout the current school year.

Kevin, the only male participant in the study, is one of two male teachers in grades kindergarten through fourth at South Side Elementary School. Kevin began teaching at SES five years ago. He holds a Bachelor's Degree and identifies himself as a Hispanic male. Near the end of 2011, Kevin expressed interest in moving to another school within the Kennedy School District. Kevin is charged with creating the mathematics lesson plans for the grade level. He began as a Roots teacher in SFA, but after expressing concerns about that component, was moved to Wings at the start of the second quarter of the school year.

Jessica has been teaching at SSES since 2005. Prior to joining the staff at SES, Jessica taught at a nearby suburban school where nearly 90% of the students were from a middle class to upper-middle class background. Jessica has a Bachelor's Degree and identifies herself as a Caucasian female. She is responsible for creating the reading and language arts lesson plans for the grade level. Jessica began as a Roots teacher in SFA, but similar to Kitty, she moved to the Wings at the start of third quarter.

The participants' context information provides insight into the experience and background of each of the participants. The next section of this chapter includes the individual case studies of each participant. The case studies are written in the following order: Kitty, Caroline, Kevin, and Jessica.

	Kitty	Caroline	Kevin	Jessica
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Female
Race	Hispanic	Caucasian	Hispanic	Caucasian
Overall Years of Teaching Experience	7	6	5	6
Years Teaching in the Kennedy School District	6 to 10	6 to 10	6 to 10	6 to 10
Grade Level Taught	2	2	2	2
Highest Level of Education Completed	Master's Degree in Education	Master's Degree in Education	Bachelor's Degree in Education	Bachelor's Degree in Education

Figure 5. Participant context information

Introduction to the Case Studies

The decision to reveal and interpret the results of this study through the case study lens was grounded in the notion that case studies provide an opportunity for the researcher to better understand the participants' perspectives and actions by examining their view of reality (Lather, 1992). Consequently, the case studies were constructed based on the chronological order of the innovation. The innovation can be described as a two-phase process consisting of the Professional Development Workshop Series and The Cycle of Targeted Coaching. Figure 6 and Figure 7 provide a visual that represents each phase of the innovation.

The Professional Development Workshop Series (PDWS) occurred after the pre-test surveys and pre-test interviews were completed. The original intent was to hold one session per day until they were each completed. However, due to the nature of scheduling, the sessions occurred consecutively on a Saturday afternoon at SSES. The order of the sessions was Prioritizing Standards, Creating Aligned Assessments, and Using Data from those Assessments to Inform Instruction. The content of the sessions was delivered through Microsoft PowerPoint. As stated earlier, the design of the PDWS was based on scholarly literature as well as the participants' responses on their surveys and interviews. The nature of the sessions was interactive so that participants could reflect in writing and verbally about their prior knowledge of the session's topic and the knowledge gained as a result of the session. These reflections were the primary data sources yielded from the PDWS.

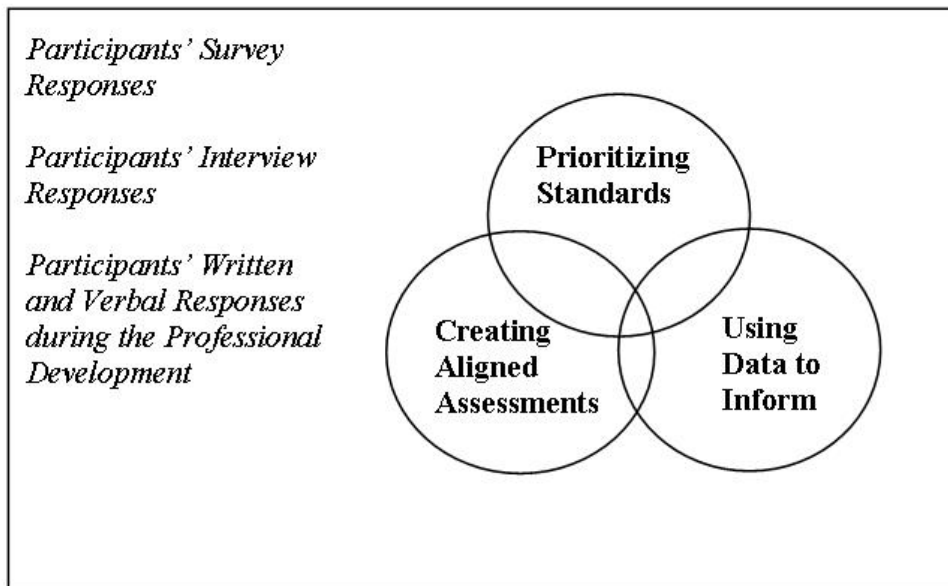


Figure 6. Professional Development Workshop Series

The second phase of the innovation consisted of the Cycle of Targeted Coaching (CTC). The flow of the cycle began with the participants submitting their lesson plans on a weekly basis. Feedback was then provided, usually within 48 hours. The researcher would then observe the participants teach a lesson. After the observation, the researcher and participants would schedule a time for a coaching session which lasted an average of 25 minutes. The data sources that encompassed the CTC included the following: participants' survey responses participants' interview responses, participants' lesson plans and the rubric-based feedback provided on those plans, Observations were documented using the Anecdotal Record and Instructional Observation Rubric and Coaching Conversations which were recorded using the Peer Coaching Reflective Guide.

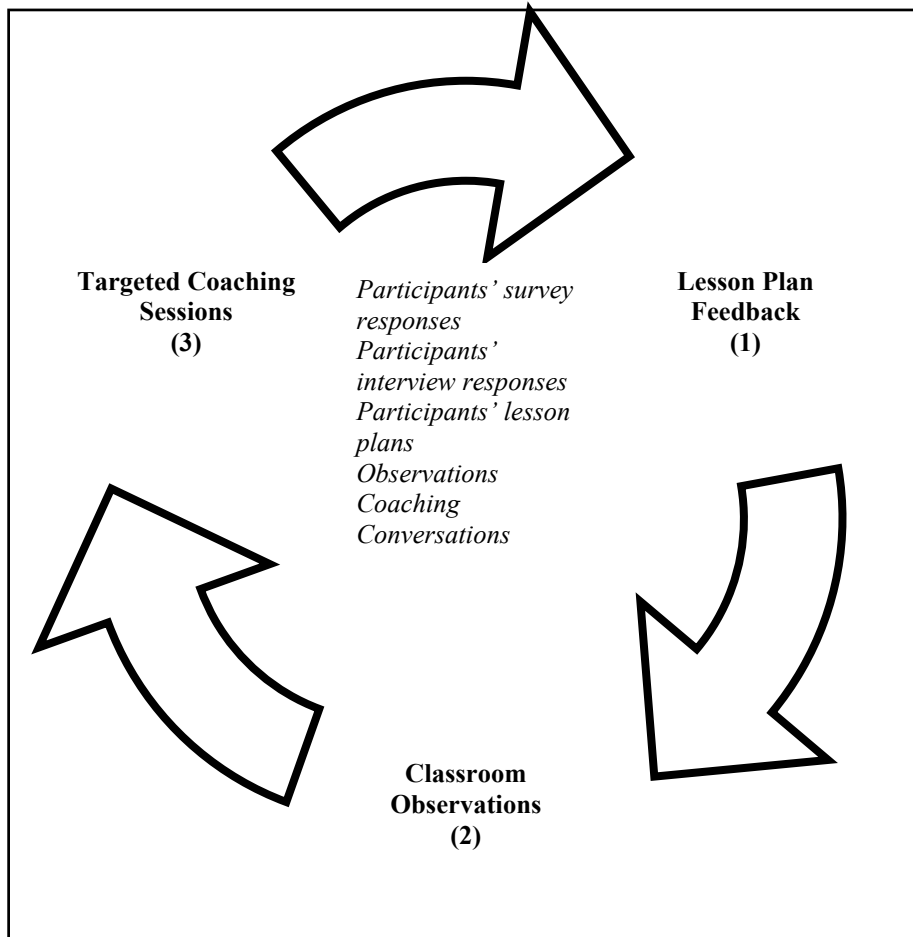


Figure 7. Cycle of Targeted Coaching

The chronological design and structure of the case studies is consistent across the cases to provide clarity to the reader and ensure the participants' stories were accurately told. Each case contains two main subheadings, Professional Development Workshop Series and Cycle of Targeted Coaching respectively. Each main subheading is subsequently followed by another subheading relating to the interpretation of the results that were yielded from that phase of the

innovation. The case studies are presented in the order of Kitty, Caroline, Kevin, and Jessica.

Kitty

When Kitty was first approached about participating in the study, she appeared to be enthusiastic about receiving support to improve her planning practices and instruction. Before progressing through the innovation, it was important to discern Kitty's perspective regarding effective teaching, planning, and professional development. During the pre-test survey, there were three open ended items. One item was "Describe what qualities make an effective teacher?" Kitty responded that they are "invested in [the] growth and progressions of each student." When asked what qualities make her an effective teacher, she stated that her ability to "use data to determine what must be retaught" was a strength. These same answers reoccurred on the post-test survey when she used the term "Data Driven" to answer the same aforementioned questions. The third open-ended question on the pre-test survey solicited Kitty's response regarding the qualities that constitute effective professional development. She indicated that effective professional development was relevant to the teacher's needs, proven to be effective, and practical. Figure 8 provides a visual of Kitty's interview and survey responses regarding professional development. With that information revealed, Kitty began the Professional Development Workshop Series.

Questions regarding Professional Development	Pre-test responses	Post-test responses
Describe what qualities constitute effective professional development. (Interview Item)	Relevant to teachers' need Proven to be effective	Practical Simple to implement
In what ways has professional development impacted your instruction? (Interview Item)	I feel overwhelmed; like they just added one more thing for me to do It's very rare that professional development has given me something useful for the classroom I feel like it's just another task for us or something else to do	It is easy to understand; easy to implement; I appreciate professional development that is seamless
Professional development has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Professional development has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Professional development has helped me improve my planning skills as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree

Figure 8. Kitty's interview and survey responses regarding professional development

Kitty's participation in the Professional Development Workshop

Series. The Professional Development Workshop Series was designed to assess the participants' knowledge about the three elements of effective planning. The first session centered on prioritizing standards. At the beginning of the session, Kitty was asked to write her definition of prioritized standards. She wrote, "Deciding which standards are absolutely essential and the depth to which they are taught...determining which standards are secondary and need less time." At the end of the session she was asked to outline the process for prioritizing

standards in writing, which was the main portion of the content delivered during this session. Her answer was: 1) select the standard, 2) identify/underline nouns and verbs within the standard, 3) organize nouns and verbs, and 4) verify with colleagues the selection you made. During the PDWS there were times when the participants worked collaboratively to perform tasks or answer questions. By the nature of the seating arrangements, which the participants chose themselves, Kitty consistently partnered with Jessica.

Session two of the Professional Development Workshop Series centered on creating aligned assessments. The session began after a five minute break which was used to change the PowerPoint, prepare the materials, and give the participants the opportunity to rest. At the beginning of the session, Kitty was asked to list five steps for creating aligned assessments. One of her responses was to “anticipate student outputs for a given assessment.” During this session the participants were given one of their grade level standards that they had not taught and were asked to create an aligned assessment. In pairs, the participants’ worked to create an aligned assessment for “Describe literary elements of text including characters, plot, and setting.” Kitty and her partner created an assessment with the following questions: 1) List the main characters and identify what their specific problem was, and 2) Draw a picture of the setting. At the end of the session she was asked a second time to describe the process for creating aligned assessments. Kitty answered the same question with the following: 1) identify the standard, 2) target alignment, and 3) check the assessment.

The third session evolved around the use of data to determine instruction. This was also the shortest session in terms of time. When asked at the beginning of the session, “How do you use data to inform your instruction?” Kitty replied,

Data determines what standards have been mastered and what must be retaught. Data gives snapshots of student strengths and weaknesses. Data provides an opportunity for teacher self-reflection. Data provides an opportunity for celebration.

In an interview regarding the use of data to plan for instruction, Kitty revealed the following, “...sometimes [regarding student mastery] I can tell right away and sometimes I can’t tell. Like in math sometimes I won’t be able to tell until after I grade a quiz or something like that. I’m like oops let’s do that again.” The information that was collected around Kitty’s thoughts and opinions about professional development and the Professional Development Workshop Series provided a snapshot of the knowledge she possessed and possibly gained concerning each of the elements of effective planning. However, it was still imperative to understand the area of effective planning from Kitty’s perspective, which would be a foundational piece of the CTC. The next section details the analysis of Kitty’s participation in the PDWS.

Interpretation of Kitty’s participation in the Professional Development Workshop Series. Based on the results of the Professional Development Workshop Series, Kitty’s opinion regarding professional development shifted in a positive direction from the start of the innovation to the conclusion. The positive sentiment that Kitty had concerning the professional development that occurred

during the innovation was echoed by her responses during the interviews and artifacts she produced during the Professional Development Workshop Series. According to her responses, the concepts she learned during the professional development were easy to understand and easy to implement. The next section begins the discourse on Kitty's view of effective planning and her participation in the Cycle of Targeted Coaching.

Kitty's Cycle of Targeted Coaching: Introduction. To better understand Kitty's insight around effective planning, she was asked during the pre-test interview to define effective planning. Her response was, "...effective planning is having a clear vision of your desired outcomes and then working your way back and breaking goals into smaller goals to help you achieve it." According to Kitty, she plans for her lessons approximately one week prior to when they are taught. When asked what factors influenced her planning, she revealed that timing and her big goal were the most important factors. This information, along with Kitty's interview and survey responses, would provide valuable insight throughout the course of the Cycle of Targeted Coaching as the primary goal in coaching Kitty was to help her improve her planning practices. Figure 9 provides a summary of Kitty's sentiments regarding peer coaching.

For the sake of clarity, the CTC was outlined in Figure 7. It yielded the following data sources: participants' survey responses, participants' interview responses, participants' lesson plans and the rubric based feedback provided on those plans, observations which were documented using the Anecdotal Record and Instructional Observation Rubric, and coaching conversations which were

recorded using the Peer Coaching Reflective Guide. Furthermore, a complete cycle consisted of lesson plan submission, lesson plan feedback, one observation, and one coaching session.

Survey items	Pre-test Results	Post- test Results
What does peer coaching mean to you? (Interview Item)	Colleague to colleague helping each other with a specific task or area of instruction Someone within the campus that is maybe an expert or more experienced with a certain area and they can share their advice	Colleague assessing strengths and weaknesses and helping to make improvements on weaknesses Built on a relationship of trust; a peer coach is a resource
Have you ever been peer coached? (Pre-test Interview Item) In what ways has this peer coaching impacted you? (Post-test Interview Item)	I think the closest I have come to peer coaching is as a student teacher	This peer coaching has caused me to be more reflective because it's been ongoing; it was effective
Peer Coaching has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Peer Coaching has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Peer Coaching has given me no new knowledge or skills related to planning for instruction. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Strongly Disagree

Figure 9. Kitty’s interview and survey responses regarding peer coaching

Cycle of Targeted Coaching. As previously mentioned, the Instructional Observation Rubric was used during the course of Kitty’s observations to measure her progress on seven indicators and to facilitate our coaching conversations. Please refer to Appendix F for a detailed description of each indicator on the Instructional Observation Rubric. The following paragraph provides a picture of

the first observation and the coaching sessions that corresponded to the rubric ratings. Figure 10 provides a visual of Kitty's rubric ratings on her first and last lesson plan submission and observation.

The first observation of Kitty occurred on October 25, 2011. There were 21 students sitting in groups of four. This particular observation occurred during her math lesson. Kitty had eight students at the board answering questions while the remainder of the class worked at their desk. While Kitty was helping the students at the board, there were only about five students who were actually working. The other eight students were engaged in minor misbehaviors from talking to not following directions. The anecdotal record notes that the only way for Kitty to truly grasp if students mastered the concept was for students to go to the board and answer the problems. However, as previously mentioned, there were only eight students at the board. This would become a major coaching point for Kitty. How do we ensure that we are fully gauging the comprehension of all students?

One of the action steps was to create more ways for Kitty to informally assess students' comprehension. When asked how we could do that, she stated that she would incorporate white boards into her instruction. It was her belief that white boards would be an efficient way for students to work from their seats while giving her an accurate picture of the specific students who were mastering the concept. In order to complement this strategy, it was suggested that Kitty develop hand signals with her class. The rationale for this suggestion was when there were disagreements among the class about a particular response, she could use the hand

signals as a way of having all students communicate in a discreet fashion while checking for their understanding. As a result of this conversation, one would expect to see these strategies or ones similar to them incorporated into the mathematics lesson plan. However, it was important to remember the mathematics lesson plans were created by Kevin and not Kitty. Because of this factor, Kitty was forced to incorporate additional strategies and structures without first putting them in her lesson plans.

Her second observation, which occurred on November 16, 2011, did show signs of Kitty incorporating hand signals to determine whether or not students were grasping the concept. For example, while having students count coins during the math lesson, she stated, “Show me with your fingers how many dimes are up?” To this question, only six students raised their fingers. Although Kitty attempted to improve the way she gauged her students’ comprehension, she was largely wedded to the idea of generating a response from the entire class at once, which contributed to her rubric rating not increasing in that area. On the other hand, further coaching conversations with Kitty revealed to need to address the lack of students participating or engagement by providing alternative explanations or using alternative teaching strategies when students were confused.

Kitty expressed concerns about her pacing during the guided and independent practice portions her lessons with regard to students not understanding what was being asked of them during guided and independent practice. This concern seemed to be validated by the observations in which, on average, less than 50% of the students working during guided practice would

respond correctly or demonstrate mastery of the concept being taught. As a result, Kitty was coached on trying to incorporate small group instruction into her independent practice to allow her to provide additional support to the students who needed it. While open to the idea, she in fact made an attempt to use small group instruction over the course of the next three observations. However, it also became clear that she had not discussed the procedures and expectations during this time. An example of this can be seen in her final observation.

During the course of her last observation on December 20, 2011, Kitty was working with the five students in the back of the room, five students were out of their seats and seven students were not working at all. As Kitty continued working with the small group, students would raise their hands and ask questions pertaining to their next task or when they would have time to work with the teacher. Although her attempt at small group instruction may not have been successful and earned her an “intermediate” rating for implementing alternative teaching strategies, by modeling and reviewing the procedures for small group time the class could have been more productive as the students would have a sense of purpose. In her final reflection of the coaching, Kitty noted that her strengths were her awareness and ability to group students who may require more support with a more capable peer. She was also proud that she increased the variety of assessments, by asking students to not only respond orally, but through checks for understanding, such as white boards and within cooperative learning structures. She stated that her area of growth was still in managing her classroom.

	First Mathematics Lesson Plan	First Observation	Last Mathematics Lesson Plan	Last Observation
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
I craft good questions for my students	Primary	Advanced	Primary	Advanced
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students	Primary	Not Observed	Primary	Intermediate
I use a variety of assessment strategies	Primary	Primary	Primary	Intermediate
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom	Primary	Not Observed	Primary	Primary
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards	Primary	Intermediate	Primary	Not Observed

Figure 10. Kitty’s Instructional Observation Rubric Ratings

Interpretation of Kitty’s Cycle of Targeted Coaching. When it comes to gauging the influence that the coaching model had on Kitty’s planning, inclusive of the observations, lesson plan feedback, and coaching, there are two primary explanations. First, the data could suggest that the coaching model may have had little influence on Kitty’s planning practices. When Kitty would submit her lesson plans, they were reviewed using the Instructional Observation Rubric and returned with feedback. She then had the opportunity to revise her lesson plans based on the feedback that was included about how to increase her rating on an indicator. On two of the seven indicators Kitty showed no growth during the

course of the innovation, meaning the “primary” rating she received on her lesson plans was what was observed during her instruction. One of these areas was effectively gauging student comprehension. It is important to note that regarding the mathematics lesson plans, Kitty did not create those plans. Therefore, one had to question the degree to which it was reasonable for Kitty to revise those plans in which she did not create, especially when she did make attempts to incorporate the feedback into her instruction. It would appear that within this context of Kitty incorporating the lesson plans into her actual lessons in place of the lesson plans, she was engaging in “interactional planning”. As previously stated in the literature review, this method of planning seeks to improve the manner in which students interact with various components within the lesson as opposed to the objectives themselves. Another example of the coaching model not influencing Kitty’s planning practices is visible in the fact that there were three areas on the rubric where Kitty was rated “primary” in her lesson plans. However, those same indicators could not be rated during the course of her observations, as they were not present. In retrospect, perhaps a change in the observation time could have yielded different ratings for those indicators that were not observed.

The second explanation is that the coaching model may have positively influenced Kitty’s planning practices. An example of its positive impact on Kitty can be seen in her receiving a “primary” rating for the indicator of “I craft good questions for my students”; yet she received the rating of “advanced” based on the observation of her instruction. This means that while she may not have included the questions she would ask her students during the lesson in her lesson

plans, she responded to the feedback and asked open-ended questions to elicit students' responses based on the Observation Anecdotal Record form. The next case study that follows is Caroline.

Caroline

Very similar to Kitty, Caroline was also enthused about participating in this study. Caroline, the grade level's only English Language Development Teacher, wanted to learn new strategies for improving her planning and instruction. She explained that she always had to be well-planned because of the requirements associated with teaching students learning English as a second language and the strict time limits for teaching certain subjects. The pre-test survey included three open ended items. One item was "Describe what qualities make an effective teacher?" Caroline responded, "Know the standards that need to be taught...learn from mistakes and come up with a new way to teach a specific skill...work with student data to guide instruction." When asked what qualities make her an effective teacher, unlike Kitty, none of her responses detailed elements of effective planning. Instead, she lauded her organization skills and ability to invest in students as qualities that make her effective. It was after this question that one could ponder, "If she has outlined the qualities of an effective teacher, then why does she not apply them to herself?" It was not until the post test survey when she used the term "Data Driven" to describe herself that a sense developed that she was beginning to think more highly of her teaching. The third open-ended question on the pre-test survey solicited Caroline's response regarding the qualities that constitute effective professional development. She indicated that effective professional development provided concrete examples of how to apply strategies, provided hands-on experience or role-playing

opportunities, and provided relevant examples that could be taken back to the classroom. Figure 11 provides a visual of Caroline’s interview and survey responses regarding professional development. With that information revealed, Caroline began the professional development workshop series.

Questions Regarding Professional Development	Pre-test Responses	Post-test Responses
Describe what qualities constitute effective professional development. (Interview Item)	Provide concrete examples of how to apply strategies Hands on experience or role playing opportunities Relevant examples to take back to the classrooms	Easy to implement Follow up
In what ways has professional development impacted your instruction? (Interview Item)	Given me different concrete ideas Take home activities	Given me ideas
Professional development has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Professional development has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Agree	Agree
Professional development has helped me improve my planning skills as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Agree	Agree

Figure 11. Caroline’s interview and survey responses regarding professional development

Caroline’s participation in the Professional Development Workshop

Series. The Professional Development Workshop Series was designed to assess the participants’ knowledge about the three elements of effective planning. The first of the three sessions centered on prioritizing standards. At the beginning of the session, Caroline was asked to write her definition of prioritized standards.

She wrote, “What students need to know and in what order they need to know it...Everything students need in order to progress.” At the end of the session she was asked to outline the process for prioritizing standards. Her answer was: 1) determine the priority standard, 2) underline nouns and verbs within the standard, 3) visualize nouns and verbs, 4) pick a topic or unit that the standard will be taught in, and 5) verify with colleagues the selection you made.

Session two of the Professional Development Workshop Series centered on creating aligned assessments. At the beginning of the session Caroline was asked to list five steps for creating aligned assessments. One of her responses was to “make sure the content was introduced”. She did not include providing clear learning targets, identifying gaps in student learning, providing timely feedback, or student centrality. The third session evolved around the use of data to determine instruction. When asked during the third session of the PDWS, “How do you use data to inform your instruction?” Caroline stated,

Data helps me determine if I need to spend more time on background knowledge. I might discuss what areas they did not understand. I may ask a student who does not understand the content to explain how they came to that answer.

The information that was collected around Caroline’s thoughts and opinions about professional development and the Professional Development Workshop Series provided a snapshot of the knowledge she possessed and possibly gained concerning each of the elements of effective planning. However, it was still imperative to understand the area of effective planning from Caroline’s

perspective, which would be a foundational piece of the CTC. The next section details the analysis of Caroline's participation in the PDWS.

Interpretation of Caroline's participation in the Professional

Development Workshop Series. When viewing the definitions Caroline provided regarding the three elements of planning, one can conclude that Caroline has a basic level of understanding regarding prioritizing standards, creating aligned assessments, and using the data from those assessments to plan instruction. An example of this can be seen by viewing Caroline's process for prioritizing standards. The steps she outlined closely resembled the process outlined in the literature. On the other hand, when it came to the element of creating aligned assessments, the only criteria she answered correctly was "standards based". She did not include providing clear learning targets, identifying gaps in student learning, providing timely feedback, or student centrality. Lastly, regarding the use of data to plan for instruction, Caroline's statement, much like Kitty's, gave the sense that she understood the importance of using data to plan for instruction, and she was actually incorporating it into her planning and instruction. It was her responses within this session that sparked curiosity as to how this element was occurring in her planning and how it looked in her instruction. The section that follows details Caroline's view of effective planning and her participation in the Cycle of Targeted Coaching.

Caroline's Cycle of Targeted Coaching: Introduction. To better understand Caroline's insight around effective planning, she was asked during the pre-test interview to define effective planning. Her response was,

“...deciding where the students are and where they need to be and what we need to cover...being prepared, knowing what your objectives are, and what your timeframe is to have what concept taught.” According to Caroline, she plans for her lessons with her grade level team on Thursdays as well as at night and on the weekends for about two hours. When asked what factors influenced her planning, she revealed that the number of students and their progress around specific concepts greatly impacted her planning. This information, along with Caroline’s interview and survey responses, would provide valuable insight throughout the course of the Cycle of Targeted Coaching. For the sake of clarity, the CTC was previously described in the “Introduction to the Case Studies” and expounded upon during Kitty’s Case Study. The primary goal in coaching Caroline was to help her improve her planning practices through a peer coaching process. Figure 12 provides a summary of Caroline’s sentiments regarding peer coaching.

Survey Items	Pre-test Results	Post-test Results
What does peer coaching mean to you? (Interview Item)	Colleagues helping and talking about different ways that you could make it better	Someone that can see something that I can't; develop suggestions for what you can do to improve
Have you ever been peer coached? (Pre-test Interview Item) In what ways has this peer coaching impacted you? (Post-test Interview Item)	I have not been peer coached	Making my lesson plans more concrete and clear Encouraged me to look for positives in student behaviors
Peer Coaching has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Peer Coaching has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Agree
Peer Coaching has given me no new knowledge or skills related to planning for instruction. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Strongly Disagree

Figure 12. Caroline's interview and survey responses regarding peer coaching

Cycle of Targeted Coaching. The Instructional Observation Rubric was used during the course of Caroline's observations to measure her progress on seven indicators and to facilitate our coaching conversations. Figure 13 provides a visual of Caroline's ratings from her second observation compared to her last. The reason that Caroline's second observation is used as a reference point in comparison to her first is that during her initial observation, she was giving an assessment to her class and as a result, none of the indicators could be observed adequately. However, anecdotal notes were still recorded regarding the

surroundings and actions of the participant and her students. One may refer to Appendix F for a detailed description of each indicator. The paragraphs that follow provide a picture of the observations and the coaching sessions that correspond to the rubric ratings.

Caroline's second observation occurred on November 15, 2011. Prior to her observation she exhibited such a high level of enthusiasm toward participating in the innovation. Her classroom environment possessed an overwhelming sense of learning and the students appeared to be invested and engaged in learning. One could argue that perhaps the many examples of student work posted around the room, the motivational posters, or the classroom data charts contributed to his feeling. During the initial observation, it was witnessed with more frequency that although students were engaged and appeared to be learning, scores from their assessments revealed otherwise. For example, Caroline taught subtraction with regrouping. She would write a problem on the board and then instruct students to answer it by showing their work. As the students worked, Caroline would circulate around the room. During this particular observation, there were five students who she did not reach. This could be attributed to the fact that those students were seated in the far west end of the room and because the students were in groups of four, it was too difficult to navigate around the desk to take a clear look at their work. At the end of the lesson, the students completed an assessment. The results from the assessment showed 75% of her students mastered the concept.

Caroline, who expected more from her students, set a goal for her students to achieve 80% mastery on assessments. While she did circulate around the room to check the students' answers as they were working, she did not reach everyone. Also it took approximately two minutes for her to circulate around the room, check students' work, and offer feedback to those who were making little progress. The argument can be made that Caroline was gauging student comprehension, but could it be more effective was the question.

Initially when Caroline would ask questions, she would open them to the entire class and only yield responses from a few students. Part of the targeted coaching heavily emphasized the need to "check-in" with all students. From the coaching conversations, it was prioritized that using hand signals or dry erase boards to give each student the opportunity to participate would be a good start toward growth in this area. In turn, Caroline was able to see at a glance the number of students who were and were not mastering the concept being taught. Also, because she was holding all of her students accountable, she indicated there was a decrease in minor misbehaviors, such as talking out of turn, not following directions, and being off task. This was also evident in subsequent observations of her class. Furthermore, the level to which she was holding her students accountable was evident in her lesson plans. Caroline scripted not only the questions she would ask, but also to whom she would ask those questions. One can refer to Figure 13 for a look at Caroline's ratings on the rubric for those two concepts. According to Figure 13, Caroline's ratings in "crafting good questions" and "gauging student comprehension" from her first observation to her last

observation may have consistently advanced in her lesson planning, but they increased in her observations from primary to advanced which matched the ratings she received on her lesson plans. In our final coaching conversation, Caroline noted one of her strengths was “constantly assessing what the students have learned”. She listed her primary area of growth as mixing up the various teaching strategies she uses outside of direct instruction and modeling.

	First English Language Lesson Plan	First Observation	Final English Language Lesson Plan	Final Observation
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach	Advanced	Primary	Advanced	Advanced
I craft good questions for my students	Advanced	Primary	Advanced	Advanced
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students	Advanced	Primary	Advanced	Intermediate
I use a variety of assessment strategies	Intermediate	Primary	Advanced	Not Observed
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	Intermediate	Intermediate	Primary	Advanced
I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom	Advanced	Primary	Advanced	Intermediate
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards	Not observed	Primary	Advanced	Not Observed

Figure 13. Caroline’s Instructional Observation Rubric ratings

Interpretation of Caroline's Cycle of Targeted Coaching. Caroline's survey results reveal that the peer coaching provided during the study was relevant to her classroom experience and provided her with new knowledge and skills. These facts are complimented by her comments during the interview conducted at the end of the study in which she stated that the peer coaching made her lesson plans more clear and concrete as well as her responses during the Professional Development Workshop Series in which she was able to correctly outline and define the process for effective planning. Furthermore, Caroline's lesson plans were consistently rated "Advanced" with the exception of twice during the second set of lesson plans, and once during the final set of lesson plans. Based on Caroline's lesson planning throughout the course of the innovation, she could be labeled as a "system-based" planner. As the literature review would suggest, this approach begins with organizing objectives and then building the methods of the lesson to support teaching the objective. On the other hand, her advanced level of "systems based" planning did not transfer into her instruction based on her observations. For example, during her initial lesson plan, Caroline was rated "intermediate" for using a variety of assessment strategies, yet according to her observation she was rated "primary". This notion of Caroline's lesson plans ranking higher than the instruction that was observed occurred four times during her final observation. As a result, the data would suggest that the coaching model helped Caroline maintain her high level of planning, but it did not aid her in transferring that feedback into her instruction. The next case study that follows is Kevin.

Kevin

Throughout the innovation, Kevin consistently maintained a classroom size of approximately 24 students. During the pre-test survey there were three open-ended items. One item was “Describe what qualities make an effective teacher?” Kevin did not respond to this item. However, on the post-test survey his reply was, “Having compassion...caring ...being organized...being creative...and begin engaged.” When asked to identify qualities that make him an effective teacher, Kevin once again chose not to respond on the pre-test. Nevertheless on the post-test he listed the same qualities that he used to define effective teachers overall. The third open-ended question on the pre-test and post-test survey asked him to describe the qualities that constitute effective professional development. By the time he completed this same question on the post-test, his response on the pre-test survey changed to the following regarding effective professional development:

It is organized and well structured with regard to time and materials. It provides new and creative ways to grow and learn. It is current and uses current research. It provides exciting and engaging activities that draws people in.

Figure 14 provides a visual of Kevin’s interview and survey responses regarding professional development. With that information revealed, Kevin began the Professional Development Workshop Series.

Questions Regarding Professional Development	Pre-test Responses	Post-test Responses
Describe what qualities constitute effective professional development. (Interview Item)	Personal commitment to expanding and widening knowledge. Continued self-evaluation	Organized Up to date Exciting and engaging
In what ways has professional development impacted your instruction? (Interview Item)	I always pick up neat ideas I get new resources When you start collaborating with other teachers you pick up a lot of new ideas	I need more interesting professional development I wish they (KSD) would come up with more interesting workshops
Professional development has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Agree	Agree
Professional development has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Agree	Agree
Professional development has helped me improve my planning skills as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Agree	Agree

Figure 14. Kevin’s interview and survey responses regarding professional development

Kevin’s participation in the Professional Development Workshop

Series. As stated earlier, session one revolved around prioritizing standards.

Kevin was asked give his definition of prioritized standards to which he replied, “I think of a curriculum map and the pacing guide. I think of the concepts of the math and which ones are in each quarter and how much time we can give each concept.” At the end of the session he was asked outline the process for prioritizing standards. His response was to 1) choose the performance objectives and the concepts, 2) underline the nouns and verbs, 3) organize them in order, and 4) verify with colleagues.

Session two was focused on creating aligned assessments. At the beginning of the session Kevin was asked to detail the process for creating aligned assessments. One of his responses was to “Review what I have already taught...” At the end of the session, he stated, “[Assessments are] student centered, identify a gap in student learning, and are standards based.” The only two factors he did not mention were provide clear learning targets and provide timely feedback. The third session was using data to plan for instruction. When asked at the beginning of the session to tell how he uses data to plan to for instruction he responded, “[Data tells me] how much time to give the next lesson, how much review was needed, and was my teaching effective.”

The information that was collected around Kevin’s thoughts and opinions about professional development and the Professional Development Workshop Series provided a snapshot of the knowledge she possessed and possibly gained concerning each of the elements of effective planning. However, it was still imperative to understand the area of effective planning from Kevin’s perspective, which would be a foundational piece of the CTC. The next section details the analysis of Kevin’s participation in the PDWS.

Interpretation of Kevin’s participation in the Professional Development Workshop Series. Kevin’s survey and interview responses indicated a positive response to professional development. Also, his answers to the questions asked at the end of the Professional Development Workshop Series, much like his survey and interview responses, would suggest he learned new knowledge and skills during the innovation. When it came to the first session of the PDWS, much like

his other two colleagues, Kevin's responses closely resembled the literature-based definition for prioritizing standards. Furthermore, when it came to discussing how he would create an aligned assessment at the conclusion of the second session, he answered the question with a response that more closely resembled the process articulated through the literature. Regarding the third session, or using data to plan for instruction, one could conclude that Kevin possessed a minimal understanding of how data could be used to inform subsequent instruction in his classroom. His response was also in close alignment with Kitty and Caroline's in that they all agreed data made them more reflective. The section that follows details Kevin's view of effective planning and her participation in the Cycle of Targeted Coaching.

Kevin's Cycle of Targeted Coaching: Introduction. When asked during an interview to define effective planning, Kevin replied with the following statement:

I think that teachers who have a common goal amongst their grade level and plan effectively according to the standards and benchmarks...I think too when you have the end in mind...teachers who have that framework in their mind of what the results are going to be, they are able to plan...what they want the students to know and of course take away from the lesson once it's over.

According to Kevin, he plans for his lessons on the weekends and spends about three to four hours. The primary factor that influences his planning appears to be the type of events or holidays approaching on the calendar as his indicated in his

interview. As mentioned previously, it was important to learn his perspective regarding effective planning. This information, along with Kevin’s other interview and survey responses, would provide valuable insight throughout the course of the Cycle of Targeted Coaching. For the sake of clarity the CTC was previously described in the “Introduction to the Case Studies” and expounded upon during Kitty’s Case Study. The primary goal in coaching Kevin was to help him improve his planning practices through a peer coaching process. Figure 15 provides a summary of Kevin’s sentiments regarding peer coaching.

Survey Items	Pre-test Results	Post-test Results
What does peer coaching mean to you? (Interview Item)	A relationship between you and the coach that helps and guides you to be more effective in your personal teaching.	Someone who has more experience in the field who can guide you and help you and not critique you. It should be a positive experience
Have you ever been peer coached? (Pre-test Interview Item) In what ways has this peer coaching impacted you? (Post-test Interview Item)	I have never been peer coached before.	I like it because there are some things I have changed and it works. It felt like another experience. Very positive.
Peer Coaching has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Disagree	Agree
Peer Coaching has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Disagree	Agree
Peer Coaching has given me no new knowledge or skills related to planning for instruction. (Survey Item)	Disagree	Disagree

Figure 15. Kevin’s interview and survey responses regarding peer coaching

Cycle of Targeted Coaching. With each of the participants, the Instructional Observation Rubric was used to measure their progress on seven indicators and to facilitate our coaching conversations. Figure 16 provides a visual of Kevin’s ratings from his first and final observation. Please refer to Appendix F for a detailed description of each indicator. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the observations and coaching sessions that occurred.

During the first observation on October 31, 2011, Kevin’s class had just received a donation of goodie bags filled with candy from a sponsor for Halloween. As a result, Kevin was leading his class in a lesson on letter writing in order to thank the class sponsor. Kevin had an exemplar letter posted on the board and he then began to discuss the parts of the letter. Once he was finished with his explanation, three students raised their hand to ask questions. The questions consisted of the following; “Can we write our own letter or do we have to copy the one on the board?”, “Do we have to do a final copy?”, and “Can we work on our own?” After Kevin answered these questions, three minutes passed and one student said, “I don’t know what to write.” After this comment, another review of the lesson plans was conducted and this activity could not be found within the week’s plan. However, the activity was still observed through the lens of the Instructional Observation Rubric and Kevin was rated accordingly.

The coaching session that followed centered on Kevin adding more detail to his lesson plans in terms of the activities that would be taking place and the student actions during the lesson. As the coach, the rationale was that this action would not only help Kevin to plan for student misunderstandings such as the ones

included above, but it would keep him focused on the lesson plan itself. On the other hand, Kevin did not write the lesson plan for reading, yet each grade level teacher agreed they would follow the plans that were created by the designated colleague. Therefore, one could question the need to first begin coaching Kevin on his planning before moving into parts of the lesson. Would Kevin be able to incorporate the lesson plan feedback into his instruction, especially if it was an area other than mathematics?

Kevin's final observation was December 20, 2011. During this observation he was seated in the back of the room and conducting reading testing of students individually. A later conversation with Kevin revealed that students who were not being tested were supposed to be working independently on their reading or their mathematics. In the midst of this observation, there was a chart posted on his bulletin board that stated "Reading Fluency Chart". The scores on this chart went from 40 to 130. The chart had one student at 40, one student at 130, and 5 at 50. The remainder scores, which were in increments of 10, each had approximately one to three students. It appeared that only 3 students were actually reading. The rest of the class was either engaging in coloring, talking with each other, or vying for Kevin's attention by raising their hands or getting out their seat and approaching him.

It was after this observation that the primary coaching point was ensuring that procedures were adequately explained and modeled for the students. Furthermore, while this testing may have been an imperative part of his instruction, it was also not written into that week's lesson plan. Just like the other

participants, Kevin received detailed feedback on the lesson plans that were submitted. Furthermore, the feedback was given based on the Instructional Observation Rubric and it detailed that information needed in order to receive a higher rating.

	Last Reading Lesson Plan	Last Observation	Last Reading Lesson Plan	Last Observation
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach	Primary	Advanced	Advanced	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I craft good questions for my students	Primary	Intermediate	Intermediate	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students	Primary	Primary	Advanced	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I use a variety of assessment strategies	Primary	Primary	Intermediate	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	Primary	Primary	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom	Primary	Primary	Advanced	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards	Primary	Not observed	Not observed	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan

Figure 16. Kevin’s Instructional Observation Rubric ratings

Interpretation of Kevin’s Cycle of Targeted Coaching. During Kevin’s initial cycle of lesson plan feedback he scored a “primary” in every indicator on

the rubric. Although he was given feedback about how to improve his planning in each indicator, his instruction only indicated growth in two areas. By the time his fifth set of lesson plans were submitted, he improved in every area except one. It is important to mention that Kevin was observed during his reading lesson, which means the actual plan would have been created by Jessica. Nevertheless, he still agreed to follow them and he also had the opportunity to incorporate the feedback into his instruction similar to Kitty and her math lessons. Regarding Kevin, none of the indicators could be observed during his fifth observation. Kevin showed growth in his planning practices by nature of Jessica, but one could argue that the coaching failed to help him transfer his improved planning into his instruction. This explanation is echoed by the fact that each of our coaching sessions revolved around him adding more details to his lesson plan to help him in the course of his instruction. When examining Kevin's case, it is difficult to place his planning practices in a category, such as "interactional" or "systems-based". The final case study that will be presented is Jessica.

Jessica

During the pre-test survey, there were three open ended items, including "Describe what qualities make an effective teacher?" Jessica's response was, "Data Driven." When asked what qualities make her an effective teacher, she echoed the same response. In the post-test survey she did not mention data at all. Instead, her responses were more based on her personality and her skill set. For example, she wrote that an effective teacher is, "understanding of students' needs, able to differentiate effectively, and has good classroom management." In terms

of her traits she said that she is “organized, uses different strategies and willing to try and learn new strategies and learn from others.” The third open-ended question sought her opinion regarding professional development. She stated that effective professional development involved her learning new strategies to take back to the classroom. This sentiment was repeated on her post-test response to the same question. Figure 17 provides a visual of Jessica’s interview and survey responses regarding professional development. With that information revealed Jessica began the Professional Development Workshop Series.

Questions Regarding Professional Development	Pre-test Responses	Post-test Responses
Describe what qualities constitute effective professional development. (Interview Item)	Learning new strategies to take back to the classroom that are effective	Better understating of what was discussed Using what was taught and applying it in the classroom
In what ways has professional development impacted your instruction? (Interview Item)	It helps to impact how I teach as a teacher and what I can do to influence my kids to try to get them up in their data	Being able to implement it in the classroom Having knowledgeable teachers present it
Professional development has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Neutral
Professional development has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Neutral
Professional development has helped me improve my planning skills as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Neutral	Neutral

Figure 17. Jessica’s interview and survey responses regarding professional development

Jessica's participation in the Professional Development Workshop

Series. The first session was designed to assess the participant's knowledge of prioritized standards. Jessica defined prioritized standards as "looking at the standards and deciding which ones are the most effective for our students to learn." After reading Jessica's response it caused to acknowledge the fact that each of the participants had at least a minimal understanding of what prioritizing standards meant according to the literature. At the end of the session, Jessica was asked to explain the process for prioritizing standards. She answered four out of five steps correctly, omitting "select topics or contexts for standards to be taught"

Session two of the Professional Development Workshop Series centered on creating aligned assessments. At the start of the session she stated the creating aligned assessments was inclusive of examining given resources, anticipating student outcomes, and determining the grading criteria. After the session was completed her responses, while different, still did not include the literature-based definitions she had been provided during the session. The third session focused on using data to plan for instruction. When asked how she uses data to impact her instruction, Jessica responded, "Data forces me to ask what did I do wrong. What can I do differently? How can I engage students to make them understand better?" The section that follows details Jessica's view of effective planning and her participation in the Cycle of Targeted Coaching.

Interpretation of Jessica's participation in the Professional Development

Workshop Series. The time spent during this innovation was the first real opportunity to observe her instruction and develop an understanding of her

planning practices in terms of the amount of time she spends planning, what resources she uses to plan, and how her plans look. Overall, Jessica responded well by providing correct answers to prompts and questions during the PDWS. Her only area of growth was in session two regarding creating aligned assessments. The data reveals that the responses she gave in terms of the steps for creating aligned assessments were important, but according to the literature, only anticipating students' outcomes is most aligned with creating aligned assessments. Jessica had a neutral opinion regarding professional development according to her survey results. Furthermore, similar to Kitty and Caroline, Jessica also found the concepts discussed within the professional development easy to implement. Upon reading her responses, an individual could conclude that Jessica was quite reflective in her answers. Her level of reflection could also evoke curiosity surrounding the role her reflection would play in her planning practices and how her reflection would influence our coaching, if in fact it would.

Jessica's Cycle of Targeted Coaching: Introduction. Having learned new information regarding Jessica's knowledge and skills concerning the three elements of planning, it was important to learn Jessica's overarching view of effective planning. She stated that effective planning encompassed begin prepared and having the right materials. Jessica indicated that she spends about two hours planning for lessons and her planning usually takes place at home on the weekends. When asked during an interview about the factors that influence her planning, she stated,

[The factors that influence my planning are] what level my kids are at, what they are understanding. I do look through homework and classwork to see what I need to reteach and I'll talk to my team if we're having trouble as a team, but basically my students where they are at...data, data, data...

As the literature would suggest, data is one of the most important factors in effective planning for instruction. It would be interesting to see the ways in which she turned her reflection into action. Furthermore, because of Jessica's reflections around effective planning, it would also be important to learn her thoughts and opinions around peer coaching. This information, along with Jessica's other interview and survey responses, would provide valuable insight throughout the course of the Cycle of Targeted Coaching. For the sake of clarity, the CTC was previously described in the "Introduction to the Case Studies" and expounded upon during Kitty's Case Study. The primary goal in coaching Jessica was to help her improve her planning practices through a peer coaching process. Figure 18 provides a summary of Jessica's sentiments regarding peer coaching.

Survey Items	Pre-test Results	Post-test Results
What does peer coaching mean to you? (Interview Item)	Helping a teacher to better themselves because if you're a better teacher then your students will be better learners	Someone helping you improve your teaching and helping your kids It's not a bad thing, I wish we had more of it
Have you ever been peer coached? (Pre-test Interview Item) In what ways has this peer coaching impacted you? (Post-test Interview Item)	I have never been peer coached	It makes me look at my teaching and see how I can change it for my students It forces me to believe in myself, especially when the coach is supportive; its been nice.
Peer Coaching has met my specific needs as a teacher. (Survey Item)	Agree	Agree
Peer Coaching has been relevant to my classroom experience. (Survey Item)	Disagree	Agree
Peer Coaching has given me no new knowledge or skills related to planning for instruction. (Survey Item)	Disagree	Disagree

Figure 18. Jessica's interview and survey responses regarding peer coaching

Cycle of Targeted Coaching. As with each of the participants, Jessica's lesson plans and observations were rated using the Instructional Observation Rubric. Figure 19 provides a visual of Jessica's ratings on the Instructional Observation Rubric. The paragraphs that follow offer a picture of the observations and the coaching sessions that correspond to the rubric ratings.

During Jessica's first observation on October 26, 2011 there were 22 students present. While observing from the rear of the classroom, the class as a whole appeared to be working independently. There was a line of about 10

students at Jessica's desk with their assignment in hand. One by one, Jessica's checked the work of each student in line. She erased the incorrect answers and told the students to rethink their responses. As she gave the symbolic wait time, she immediately began reviewing and reteaching the concept the student missed. Approximately 12 minutes into the observation, she instructed the class to face the white board at the front of the room. She asked, "What's the first thing I can do before subtracting?" A student raised his hand and said to add a minus sign. She then called one student to the front of the room to have her complete a problem. As she continued this routine, she celebrated each student with a class cheer. The observation concluded.

Based on this observation, Jessica's coaching focused on how to effectively gauge the comprehension of more than 50% of the students. While it was commendable that Jessica wanted and attempted to provide individual feedback to every child, she only reached 10 out of 22 students during the observation. As a result, we developed a plan to have students check each other's work. She would assign five problems at a time and then provide an exemplar of those items. If students answered them correctly, they help their partner who answered them incorrectly. If both students answered correctly, they could move on. Jessica responded well to this feedback as she revealed she was a proponent of cooperative learning amongst her students.

Jessica's next observation occurred on November 16, 2011. During this lesson students were counting coins. Similar to portions of her last observation, Jessica would call a student to the SmartBoard to answer a question. After the

student answered the question by counting the coins, she would then turn to the entire class and have them respond at once by giving the amount of the coins. After observing this, the following was noted in the anecdotal record, “How can we be sure all the students answered correctly?” After all, there was one student observed who in fact miscounted.

It was becoming clear that Jessica was working to effectively gauge the comprehension of her students through various strategies. However, she was consistently in the rating of “primary” for that indicator. The three subsequent coaching sessions that followed focused on helping her pinpoint specific methods and students to use in gauging the comprehension of all her students. Over the course of the next two observations, Jessica showed growth in this area, moving from primary to intermediate in her observations. It was at that point that the goal shifted quickly to helping her reach the advanced rating prior to her final observation.

During the final observation of Jessica, the students were working on an Animal Measurement Activity. Thirteen minutes into the observation Jessica took her students to the bathroom. Upon their return 10 minutes later, she displayed a poem on the SmartBoard and told the students to copy it. As they began to copy it, she circulated around the room to observe their work. This activity concluded until the end of the observation, approximately 10 minutes after the students returned. Similar to Kevin, this activity was not a part of the lesson plan. Furthermore, because it was a silent and independent activity, it was difficult to rate on the rubric as the students’ final product would be needed to determine

their level of understanding and information regarding any previous work with this particular assignment.

In the coaching conversation that ensued after her final observation, Jessica revealed that student misbehaviors in route to the restrooms caused her to alter her instructional plans. With that information in mind, the conversation steered toward her desire to increase the academic growth of her lowest learners. As this conversation took shape the primary action step that followed for Jessica was to strengthen her cooperative learning structures to ensure that students are grouped properly, that there is accountability for the students, and that she was able to provide feedback to each group or pair. Although the innovation had concluded, an informal conversation with Jessica after her final coaching session revealed that her lowest learners were starting to make progress and her cooperative learning structures were revealing more effective outcomes, based on the work she was doing.

	Mathematics Lesson Plan 1	Observation 1	Mathematics Lesson Plan 2	Observation 5
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach	Primary	Primary	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I craft good questions for my students	Primary	Intermediate	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students	Primary	Not Observed	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I use a variety of assessment strategies	Primary	Intermediate	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	Primary	Intermediate	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom	Primary	Not Observed	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards	Primary	Intermediate	Primary	Not rated; activity was not a part of lesson plan

Figure 19. Jessica’s Instructional Observation Rubric ratings

Interpretation of Jessica’s Cycle of Targeted Coaching. When it comes to answering the ways in which the lesson plan feedback, observations, and the coaching influenced Jessica’s planning practices, one could argue it had minimal influence. For example, Jessica’s lesson plans did not improve from the first set to the last set based on the feedback provided. It is important to mention that Kevin created the mathematics lesson plans. However, regarding the first lesson plan,

Jessica did respond to the feedback on four of the seven indicators and increased her ratings during the observation as a result. Jessica's response to this feedback lends itself to the "interactional" approach to planning. Moving back to the influence that the coaching model had on Jessica's actual planning practices, while Jessica's planning practices may have remained stagnant as indicated by the rubric ratings her lesson plans received, her instruction did show growth in many of the rubric indicators based on the observation. According a holistic view of the data surrounding Jessica, the primary area of growth was the level to which her progress was sustained, considering that she could not be rated during her final observation. The next section examines the case study results and interpretations of those results from a comparative perspective.

Comparative Case Study Results and Interpretations

The use of multiple case studies as a strategy for improving external validity is a common practice in educational research. By analyzing cases in a comparative fashion, one is able to investigate discrepancies and similarities within a single case as well as across the multiple cases (Gay et al., 2009). This section of the results and interpretations will first analyze the quantitative data across the cases followed by the qualitative sources of data.

Comparative quantitative results and interpretations. It is important to look at the participants' quantitative responses to determine if any shifts occurred in their mindsets regarding professional development and peer coaching. Figure 20 displays the participants' responses based on whether they were positive, negative, or no different from the pre-test to the post-test. If participants'

responses stayed the same it was labeled as “no difference” in the table.

Regarding the item of professional development meeting their needs as a teacher, Kitty and Caroline changed their response from “Neutral” to “Agree” while Kevin and Jessica agreed on both surveys. When it comes to peer coaching meeting their needs as teachers, Kitty, and Caroline changed their responses from “Neutral” to “Agree”, yet Kevin changed his from “Disagree” to “Agree”. On the other hand, Jessica’s response of “Agree” was consistent from the pre-test to the post-test.

When asked if peer coaching has been relevant to their classroom experience, each of the participants had a positive change in their response from the pre-test to the post-test survey. When viewing the items above, it is also evident that the participants’ thoughts or opinions regarding professional development and peer coaching either improved or remained the same. None of the participants decreased their estimation of professional development or peer coaching based on the table below.

Survey items	Kitty	Caroline	Kevin	Jessica
Professional development has met my specific needs as a teacher	Positive	Positive	No Difference	No Difference
Professional development has been relevant to my classroom experience	Positive	No Difference	No Difference	No Difference
Professional development has helped me improve my planning skills as a teacher	Positive	No Difference	No Difference	No Difference
Peer Coaching has met my specific needs as a teacher	Positive	Positive	Positive	No Difference
Peer Coaching has been relevant to my classroom experience	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
Peer Coaching has given me no new knowledge or skills related to planning for instruction.	Positive	Positive	No Difference	No Difference

Figure 20. Participants' responses to quantitative questions about professional development

As previously mentioned the cut score of 0.70 was used determine the reliability of the survey instrument. Table 2 provides a visual summary of the quantitative results that were yielded from the analysis. The data was collected based on the responses of the four participants.

Table 2

Professional Development and Targeted Coaching Survey Results N=4

Survey Construct	Number of Survey Items	Cronbach's Alpha	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Prioritized Standards	5	0.79	9.50	1.92
Using Data to Plan for Instruction	5	0.81	8.75	2.22
Professional Development	4	0.87	10.0	1.83
Peer Coaching	5	0.77	16.0	2.71

The construct of “prioritized standards” contained five items on the survey. The Cronbach’s Alpha was 0.79 and the mean and standard deviation were 9.50 and 1.92 respectively. The construct of “using data to plan for instruction” also contained five items. The Cronbach’s Alpha was 0.81. The mean was 8.75 and the standard deviation was 2.22. The third construct, “Professional Development” contained four items and the Cronbach’s Alpha was 0.87. The mean was 10.0 and the standard deviation was 1.83. The construct of “Peer Coaching” contains five survey items. The Cronbach’s Alpha was 0.77 and mean and standard deviation was 16.0 and 2.71 respectively. The next section discusses the qualitative comparative analysis and the interpretations.

Comparative qualitative analysis and interpretations. Overall, it appears as if the participants had a positive view of the professional development and peer coaching that occurred during the study. While this may be true, it is

important to look at how they actually responded to the coaching through their planning. Figure 21 provides a comparative summary of how the participants rated on the Instructional Observation Rubric during their final observations. On the first indicator, Caroline and Kevin rated the highest with an “Advanced” rating. Kitty and Jessica shared the rating of “Primary”. It is important to note that Kevin and Jessica were not able to be rated on their fifth observation due the fact that the activity observed was not a part of the lesson plans. Consequently, the ratings from their fourth observation are displayed. This is a consistent occurrence for Kevin and Jessica on each of the indicators during their fifth observation. On the second indicator of crafting good questions, Kitty, Caroline, and Jessica rated an “Advanced” while Kevin was “Intermediate”. On the third indicator, which was adjusting their teaching to the proper level for students, Kitty and Caroline were both “Intermediate” and Kevin and Jessica were both “Primary”. When it comes to using a variety of assessment strategies, Kitty’s rating was “Intermediate” compared to Kevin and Jessica who were both “Primary”. On the fifth indicator, Kitty, Kevin, and Jessica received a rating of “Primary” and Caroline an “Advanced” rating. Regarding the effective implementation of alterative teaching strategies, Kitty, Kevin, and Jessica were rated “Primary” and Caroline “Advanced”. The final indicator was the ability to create aligned assessments in which Kitty and Caroline could not be observed in this indicator, and Kevin and Jessica were rated “Primary”.

	Kitty Observation 5	Caroline Observation 5	Kevin Observation 4	Jessica Observation 4
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach	Primary	Advanced	Advanced	Primary
I craft good questions for my students	Advanced	Advanced	Intermediate	Advanced
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students	Intermediate	Intermediate	Primary	Primary
I use a variety of assessment strategies	Intermediate	Not Observe	Primary	Primary
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	Primary	Advanced	Primary	Primary
I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom	Primary	Intermediate	Primary	Primary
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards	Not Observed	Not Observed	Primary	Primary

Figure 21. Participants' final Instructional Observation Rubric ratings

Summary of comparative case study analysis. The first portion of the results section examined the results of each individual participant and the findings of those results. The individual case study results also led to the explanations that defined how the Coaching Model for Effective Planning influenced the teacher's planning practices. In terms of professional development and coaching itself, there is a consensus across three of the cases that it provided helpful information

and was beneficial to their teaching. This explanation is based on the participants' survey responses, interview responses, lesson plans, and observations.

On the other hand, when looking at the various ways in which the innovation impacted their planning practices, one could argue, the following: Kitty utilized the “interactional” approach to her instructional planning. She was not always able to alter her plans to the degree specified. This was largely because she did not create any of the lesson plans her team used. However, she did make serious attempts to incorporate them into her instruction. Caroline, who consistently utilized the “systems-based” approach was able to effectively alter her plans based on the feedback provided and consistently scored above primary, yet she was unable to translate her plans effectively into action, as the ratings for lesson plans and her observations differ. Kevin, the author of the math lesson plans, made little attempt to alter the lesson plans based on feedback. This in turn carried over into his instruction as he was rated “Primary” or “Not rated” an average of 78% of the time. The inability to categorize his planning practices, leads to the creation of “other” as a method to summarize Kevin’s planning practices during the innovation. At the onset of the study Jessica’s instruction seemed primed to rise above the “Primary” rating of the mathematics lesson plans. Nevertheless, by the conclusion of the study she had succumbed to the same “Primary” rating as her instruction could not be rated on a single indicator because her instruction was not aligned with her lesson plan. By examining the manner in which she improved upon her planning during the innovation, the conclusion can be reach that she too utilized the “interactional” approach to

planning during the innovation. Figure 22 provides a visual of the theoretically based approaches to planning that the participants utilized.

	Interactional Approach to Instructional Planning	Systems-based Approach to Instructional Planning	Other
Kitty	X		
Caroline		X	
Kevin			X
Jessica	X		

Figure 22. Participants' approach to instructional planning

By viewing the above visual, one can see that four individuals, who each taught the same grade level, used a varied approach in their instructional planning. Caroline planned and delivered instruction in isolation of her grade level colleagues as she wrote her English language lesson plans and instructed her students accordingly. On the other hand Kitty was forced to rely on the planning of Kevin and Jessica as they created the mathematics and language arts lesson plans respectively. It is clear from the visual that Kevin and Jessica engaged in two different approaches to their planning. One must question how did that impact Kitty. The data would suggest that the degree to which she engaged in the “systems-based” approach to planning depended in part on how Kevin and Jessica planned for instruction. Consequently, if Kitty sought to incorporate the feedback provided on the grade level lesson plans during the innovation and the other two

did not, she would have engaged in “interactional planning” or created her own lesson plans.

This chapter described the comparative analysis of the four participants who experienced the Coaching Model for Effective Planning. It also presented the interpretation of the results that were included in the analysis. The subsequent chapter will provide a discussion of the findings that resulted from the analysis of the data. It will also include the conclusion with lessons learned, limitations, and implications for further research.

Chapter 6 – Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

This chapter reports the discussion of the themes that were constructed through the analysis of the data. This chapter also reports the conclusion of this work inclusive of limitations, implications for further research, and lessons learned. The paragraphs that follow detail the findings that were discovered through the analysis of the data contained within this study. The following are the findings that merit further discourse; (a) differences in the approach to planning, (b) teachers' role in coaching, (c) the relevance of coaching, and (d) the effectiveness of coaching.

Differences in the approach to planning. Tyler (1949) is credited with introducing the “objectives first” method of instructional planning in which one plans by prioritizing standards, creating aligned assessments, and using data from those assessments to plan for instruction. On the other hand, Eisner (1967) and Toomey (1977) are credited with originating the theory of “interactional planning”, a method in which teachers focus on the activities of lessons to determine the impact on student learning. Within this study, each of the participants used varied approaches in their instructional planning. Although the participants shared lesson plans and were expected to implement them in similar fashion, the way in which they were created was different. This also contributed to the difference in which those lessons were executed. For example, Kitty was an interactional planner. She did not create any lesson plans, which for her meant

that any feedback she received had to be internalized and implemented during the course of her instruction. Caroline and Jessica were both systems-based planners. The feedback they were given became evident not only in the course of their instruction, but also in the subsequent lesson plans. Kevin did not fit into either of the aforementioned categories. The feedback that was provided to him during the course of the innovation was not evident in his instruction or in his lesson plans.

Angelides (2002) and Mouza (2006) both contend that instructional planning should occur through the process of collaboration. For these participants each one creating their specified lesson plan and sharing it amongst the grade level team embodied the concept of collaboration. As the researcher it is important to consider what could have occurred in terms of planning and instruction if the participants worked together to create each lesson plan. Furthermore, could the coaching provided to the participants have been more diverse in terms of the theoretical approach? At the inception of the innovation, it was determined that the coaching provided would be done through the lens of the Tylerian method (1949) based on the literature and current practices of colleagues at SSES. However, it was not considered that each of the participants would potentially plan using another method. On the other hand, one of the most essential benefits of the coaching provided in this study was the fact that feedback was given in a timely and specific manner. Swafford (1998) would argue that feedback is one of the essential elements of coaching. In summation, if the CMEP is going to be built upon, specifically in the area of coaching teachers around instructional planning, a scholar would have to account for the possibility that not

every participant would plan in the same manner. This would also create a space for providing feedback that was not only relevant to their planning and instruction, but also relevant for the participants' approach to planning.

Teachers' role in coaching. The coaching that was provided sought to intertwine feedback about the participants planning practices and subsequent instruction into actions and strategies that could be readily applied to the classroom (Bruce & Ross, 2008; Goker, 2005; Swafford, 1998; Zwart et al., 2009). Furthermore, because this study was a participatory action research study, the participants were given knowledge and skills with the hope that they would be able to sustain their growth after the innovation (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2007). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that while each participant experienced the same components and frequency of coaching, they each experienced different levels of growth. The first inclination is to ponder whether the coach treated each participant similarly. Based on the participants' interview responses, survey responses, and coaching conversations, they would all agree that the coaching was beneficial in term of providing new knowledge and skills that was adaptable to their classroom. They would also contend that it caused them to be more reflective in their lesson planning. However, what could explain the varying levels of growth of participants who teach the same grade and who have similar years of experience?

Teacher Efficacy suggests that teachers' ability to produce desired outcomes in any given context determine their level of efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-

Hoy, 2001). According to Bandura's (1997) concept, a teacher with a high level of self-efficacy beliefs would engage in professional development, such as targeted coaching, with the belief that the knowledge acquired and the resources gained are a reflection of his or her personal ability to be an effective teacher and increase student outcomes. Furthermore, it would be the professional development that would aid the teacher in maintaining a strong sense of efficacy (Yeo, Ang, Chong, Huan, & Quek, 2008). When placed into the context of the participants, one has to contemplate the degree to which Kevin believed his role in the coaching was a reflection of his efficacy, considering he did not incorporate any of the feedback. This would be in contrast to Caroline, who incorporated each piece of feedback and reported in coaching sessions that she was seeing growth with her students' performance. Her students' growth was also becoming evident by the numerous data charts displayed in her classroom. In summation, for a scholar seeking to continue this work, teacher efficacy would be worth exploring in order to gain perspective around participants' view of themselves as practitioners and their work.

Relevance of coaching. Nearly 30 years ago, peer coaching surfaced as a site-based method for teachers to engage in professional development (Slater & Simmons, 2001; Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen, & Bolhuis, 2007). While the success of this coaching can be determined by the level of trust between the coach and the teachers (Slater & Simmons, 2001), the ability of the coach to provide technical, emotional, and reflective support (Swafford, 1998), and the flexibility of the coach (Slater & Simmons, 2001; Zwart et al., 2007), it can also be measured by

the growth of the participants. According to Kohler, Crilley, and Shearer (2001), peer coaching is designed for teachers to learn and perfect new behaviors. As previously mentioned, the goal of the coaching in this study was to help participants improve their planning practices and subsequently instruction. It was also previously stated that the foundation of the coaching centered on the three elements of instructional planning. During the course of observations and coaching conversations, issues outside of the three elements of effective planning developed. For example, each participant wanted to improve the classroom management to a certain extent. However, because of the focus of the coaching, conversations about management were pivoted to areas of growth in instruction that could potentially address classroom management indirectly, such as effectively gauging students comprehension before an assessment or utilizing different ways of instructing students. In order for coaching to be as relevant as possible it should have space for participants to seek guidance in any area of their planning and instruction that they deem important for their students' achievement.

Effectiveness of Coaching. As stated in the previous chapter, the Coaching Model for Effective Planning influenced the participants' planning practices in a myriad of ways. Based on the data there is one participant who was minimally influenced and that was Kevin. This assertion is made due to the fact Kevin did not alter any of his lesson plans based on the feedback provided, his instruction did not mirror the lesson plans he created, and the coaching of Kevin did not yield any noticeable changes in his planning and instruction. In retrospect, the primary style of coaching that was used with the participants was a hybrid

method of peer coaching and reflective coaching. In working with the participants, one of the goals was to help them gain autonomy in improving their planning practices and subsequent instruction. As a result, reflective coaching was a means to help the participants examine the data surrounding their actions and develop meaningful and actionable solutions with the assistance of the peer coach. However, such was not the case with Kevin.

Kohler, Crilley, and Shearer (2001) contend that the success of peer coaching can be determined by the changes or improvements in teachers' pedagogical practices. Using this lens to evaluate the peer coaching contained within this study, it is clear that the coaching strategies used were not effective as it pertains to Kevin. So the questions becomes what strategies beyond mentoring and reflection could have been used to coach Kevin or possibly teachers similar to Kevin? First there is the concept of reciprocal coaching. In this form of coaching teachers work collaboratively to teach and learn from each other. This method of coaching has shown to be successful due to the notion that teachers have an intimate understanding of the challenges of teaching and the specific content being taught (Skinner & Welch, 1996). Regarding Kevin, perhaps having him collaborate with a grade level colleague who he was able to observe and provide feedback for in addition to being observed and receiving feedback, could have helped promote changes and improvements in his planning and instruction as he would be both a teacher and a learner.

A second strategy that could be used is coplanning. In this strategy the coach and the participant would work together to design the learning activities

(Schwille, 2008). This would be in stark contrast to the coach merely commenting on the lesson plans created by the participant. Vygotsky (1978) contends that coplanning can provide rich opportunities for participants to learn to design purposeful lessons and instruction in the presence of a knowledgeable and experience coach. In reflection, the question could be raised if Kevin's lack of improvement on his lesson plans was due to resistance or the idea that he was unsure of how to incorporate the feedback to improve his plans. By sitting with Kevin and planning with him, the answer to this question could have been more prevalent.

A third strategy that could have proven to be effective with Kevin is videotape analysis. Schwille (2008) argues that the video analysis of a participants' lesson could help the coach and the participant understand the thought process behind the teachers' actions as well as the students' actions. Perhaps if Kevin saw himself and his students in the midst of his instruction combined with the written and verbal feedback, he would have been more open to altering his practices. The literature surrounding peer coaching reveals many strategies for effective coaching. While the ones utilized with Kevin were unsuccessful, a future coach could consider the aforementioned strategies as a starting place for working with a participant similar to Kevin who demonstrates little growth through mentorship and reflection. This section articulated the findings that merit further discourse. The following section provides a synthesized conclusion of this work.

Conclusion

The action research conducted in this dissertation sought to determine the influence the Coaching Model for Effective Planning would have on the participants' planning practices. The research question that was investigated during this study was the following:

In what ways does The Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP) influence teachers' planning practices?

This chapter acknowledged the benefits and the areas of growth regarding the implementation of the Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP).

Furthermore, important research implications and opportunities for further study were also discussed. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the study inclusive of an introduction, synopsis of the literature, innovation, methodology, and the salient findings.

The Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP) was developed out of a contextual need to address teachers' planning practices at South Side Elementary School (SSES). Through conversations with the school administrators and an examination of school data surrounding students, it became clear there was a need for an innovative solution to improve the planning practices of teachers. While various forms of coaching existed within SSES, none were specific to improving teachers planning practices. Consequently, when preparing to design the innovation, effective planning was the first area of literature consulted. It was

this concept that lead to the subsequent review of the literature surrounding prioritized standards, creating aligned assessments, using data to plan for instruction, professional development, and targeted coaching.

This work was grounded in the theoretical foundation of the various elements of effective instructional planning. According to the literature, effective instructional planning consists of prioritizing standards, creating aligned assessments, and using data from those assessments to plan for instruction (Ball, Knobloch, & Hoop, 2007; Brown, 1988; Dick, 1986; Toomey, 1977; Tyler, 1949). Yeo, Ang, Chong, Huan, and Quek (2008) contend that effective teachers use data to prioritize standards and create aligned assessments and in order for that level of planning to remain high, they may require ongoing professional development. Furthermore, designing professional development that occurs over a period of time provides the opportunity for feedback and coaching (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2003; Birman et al, 2000; Fifield & Kedzior, 2004; Rhoton & Stiles, 2000). The concept of peer coaching can be described as the confidential process in which two or more colleagues work together to reflect on current practices that lead to the expansion, refinement, and building of new skills while sharing ideas, conducting action research, or problem solving (Robbins, 1995; Slater & Simmons, 2001). It was the aforementioned concepts, which were explored in greater detail in the literature review that provided the basis of the innovation. The paragraph that follows provides a synopsis of the innovation.

The Coaching Model for Effective Planning was constructed in two components. First, the Professional Development Workshop Series (PDWS) was developed from a framework that included goal-setting, planning, action, and reflection (Rhoton & Stiles, 2000). This component of the innovation was necessary in order to learn the knowledge and skills the participants possessed in relation to instructional planning and its three elements, including prioritizing standards, creating aligned assessments, and using the data from those assessments to plan for instruction. It was also essential for teaching the participants new knowledge and skills. The second component of the innovation was the Cycle of Targeted Coaching (CTC). The CTC was grounded in the notion that when two or more colleagues work collaboratively to reflect on current skills, a relationship can be cultivated that allows for the expansion and refinement of current skills and the building of new ones (Robbins, 1995; Slater & Simmons, 2001). This component was essential for examining the participants' current planning practices and how those practices were manifesting during the course of instruction. The CTC was also imperative for creating opportunities for the participants to reflect on their planning and respond to feedback. Through the review of literature surrounding effective planning, professional development, and targeted coaching, the innovation was constructed to investigate the aforementioned research question. The results that were yielded from the study provided a multi-faceted perspective of how the CMEP influenced teachers' planning practices. The next paragraph provides a synopsis of the methodology.

The methodology utilized in this work can be described as a participatory action research study inclusive of mixed methods. The study included four participants in addition to the researcher-practitioner. The methods of data collection were a pre/post survey, a pre/post interview, artifacts, observations, coaching conversations, and a research journal. Regarding quantitative data, descriptive statistics were conducted in the form of mean and standard deviation. Also a reliability analysis was conducted on the survey instruments. Qualitative data was analyzed using the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This approach led to subsequent analysis of the data. Furthermore, to ensure validity and credibility of the findings, triangulation (Gay et al., 2009; Greene, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and member checks were utilized. It was through this method of data analysis that the salient findings were constructed. The salient findings are (1) approaches to planning, (2) teachers' efficacy, (3) the relevancy of coaching, and (4) the effectiveness of coaching.

The first salient finding is teachers who teach within the same grade level and share lesson plans can have different approaches to planning for lessons. The method of instructional planning used by the participants was a primary factor in how the Coaching Model for Effective Planning (CMEP) influenced their planning practices as measured by their lesson plans and the subsequent observations that were conducted after feedback was provided on those plans. For example, looking through the lens of the data, the planning practices for three of the four participants were positively influenced by the CMEP as evident by lesson plans, the lesson plan feedback, the observations, and the coaching conversations.

By taking a deeper look into those three participants, two can be labeled as “systems-based” planners and one can be label as an “interactional planner. However, even the placement within a category displays a variance in planning practices. The two “systems-based” planners, Caroline and Jessica, made different gains during the study based on the data collected. Caroline on average was advanced in her planning practices based on the lesson plans, the feedback given on those plans, and the observations, while Jessica was on average primary in her planning practices. Regarding Kevin, he did not fit into one of the aforementioned planning categories. Furthermore, based on his lesson plans, the feedback provided on those plans, the observations, and the coaching conversations the data would suggests that the CMEP had little influence on Kevin’s planning practices. Based on this study, the method of planning a teacher uses is important for understanding the influence the CMEP has on teachers’ planning practices. However, this conclusion also yields to the notion that a teacher’s efficacy may be a primary factor as well.

The second salient finding is that a teacher’s efficacy may determine the degree to which the Coaching Model for Effective Planning influences his or her planning practices. As stated in the Discussion, the participants each experienced the same components of the innovation at the same frequency, yet there were varied levels of influence on teacher’s planning practices in terms of the CMEP. Based on the data, the conclusion was reached that a teacher’s efficacy could be a primary factor for exploring the ways in which the CMEP can influence teacher’s planning practices. By understanding the ways in which a teacher believes in their

capacity to grow, in addition to the outcomes the teacher may produce, a researcher would be in a better position to coach a participant at a more personalized level. In the case of this study, a conceptual understanding of teacher efficacy could add insight as to why the CMEP had little influence on Kevin's planning practices compared to the other three participants. However, another point of consideration for gauging the ways in which the CMEP influenced teachers' planning practices is the examination of the coaching strategies utilized.

The third salient finding from this study is that the coaching strategies used in the coaching model need to be more specific to the participants' individuals needs. The CMEP was grounded in literature surrounding best practices for coaching. The coaching component of the innovation played a vital role in working to influence the teachers' planning practices. As stated in the Discussion, the coaching was meant to provide the participants with new knowledge and skills and to help them transfer that knowledge and skills into their instruction. However, the transfer of knowledge and skills into instruction was not one that was consistent across the participants. Perhaps the CMEP could have been adapted to better support the participants in their instruction. The adaptation could have come in the form of increased flexibility or increased technical support in the form of modeling. This study would suggest that for coaching to be most successful, it has to meet the participants at their precise level of knowledge and skill in order to be relevant and have the greatest influence.

The last salient finding from this study is the effectiveness of coaching in the CMEP can be determined not only by participants' growth, but by the variety

of coaching strategies used to help the participants grow. While the CMEP influenced the participants planning practices in various ways, it demonstrated to be least effective for Kevin. As previously mention in the Discussion, Kevin showed a complete lack of response overall regarding the various components of the innovation, more specifically in the mentorship and peer coaching components. Based on this study, coaches who fail to see a participant's growth or improvement during peer coaching should consider alternative coaching strategies such as, reciprocal coaching, co-planning where he could have collaborated with another grade level colleagues to produce lesson plans, or videotape analysis. These alternative strategies could be implemented even when the original methods of coaching prove to be effective for the other participants.

The paragraphs that follow detail my logical summation to this work. It is imperative to mention that the thoughts below should not be construed as a generalization of this work or the innovation within it, but rather as a reflection from the experience of the researcher-practitioner.

Limitations. There were many limitations to this study. The first limitation was time. Perhaps with more time to devote to the coaching process, the results of the study could have been different, especially in terms of participants' levels of growth. After all, five cycles of coaching in a nine-week period could be greatly enhanced with a year-long cycle. Another limitation was the fact that I as the researcher and practitioner delivered the content of the innovation. I did have an established relationship with each of the participants and thus their view of me as the researcher could have been more myopic compared to

that as the practitioner in terms of the information they shared. A third limitation was the schedule of the innovation. While there was a plan of action in place for the innovation, there were many things that caused a hindrance with regard to executing the innovation fully according to the planned schedule; such as participants' attendance at work, the researcher's professional duties and scheduling conflicts, and changes to the course of the academic day due to assemblies or benchmarks. Lastly, the study only included four participants. While the participants were crucial to investigating the contextual problem at hand, perhaps the results could have been enhanced with more participants to compare and contrast.

Implications. For other scholars who are interested in investigating the impact of the Coaching Model for Effective Planning, I would recommend examining the subsequent concepts. First, consider investigating the CMEP's influence on departmentalized teachers, such as the junior high teachers. Since those teachers instruct in a single content area, perhaps the feedback they are given could become more actionable as it would be specific to a single content area as opposed to two or more. I would also consider investigating its use on teachers who would rank as high, middle, and low in terms of their performance or based on teacher efficacy. This could provide a unique opportunity for teachers to collaborate with each other in creating plans and discussing the influence on lesson plans on instruction. Third, I would consider expanding the CMEP beyond the three elements of effective planning in order to maximize the areas where participants can develop. Lastly, one must consider the coach himself. In the

context of this study, the coach had no experience teaching second grade, yet that was the grade level taught by each of the participants. Furthermore, the coach only taught four years, which is a year less than one of the participants. Also, the coach was in his first year of coaching experience. While knowledgeable in many aspects of effective instruction, one must consider that the limited expertise of the coach served as a possible factor contributing to the lack of growth among the participants overall. This notion may also be more readily applicable to Kevin and his lack of growth. Perhaps with more experience, a coach would be more apt to identifying and implementing coaching strategies that are more aligned to a participants needs and personality.

Lessons Learned. Drawing on my work with the participants and my personal experience, there are factors that may prevent one from maximizing the targeted coaching's impact on their planning and instruction. These factors can be more urgent, such as an increased class size due to an absent teacher or an amended schedule due to an impromptu assembly. They can also be more distant, such as unfamiliarity with lesson planning and content or even attempting to manage the students during instruction. My goal in this study was to help my colleagues improve their planning practices and ultimately their instruction through the Coaching Model for Effective Planning. While my study may not have achieved all of the results I expected, I have a firm belief that a coaching model similar to the one utilized in this study could have a positive influence on teachers planning practices. The ability to provide individualized feedback and attention to the participants positively resonated with them, as the overall

consensus was that the coaching was helpful and caused them to be more reflective. Notwithstanding the content that was included in my innovation, research suggests that teachers in fact would benefit from the consistent presence of a knowledgeable peer who knows their students, their planning practices, and their instructional tendencies.

Future Research. I believe that a localized individual focused on coaching specific teachers to improve their strengths and weaknesses can lead to increased capacity among colleagues within a school site and ultimately student achievement. However, based on my personal experience at SSES, I would contend one of the most prevalent roadblocks to coaching within schools is resources, primarily capital resources. I was fortunate as the practitioner and researcher that my role in both contexts closely aligned and that afforded me the flexibility to coach the participants using the CMEP. In retrospect, it is imperative for a coach to always consider the current methods of planning that a participant uses in order to provide the most specific and relevant feedback to influence change in those teacher's planning practices. Farr (2010) would argue that teacher's actions in terms of planning and instruction dictate students' action in terms of learning. Therefore, it is logical to suggest that the degree to which a teacher plans for a lesson affects the degree to which students' master new knowledge and skills in that particular lesson (Kohler, Crilley, & Shearer, 2001).

When seeking to improve the planning practices of teachers' a coach should always be cognizant of student achievement. As a coach leading the participants' through the reflective process, I often had to stop and reflect upon

the degree to which I was being explicit in communicating that our work was going to ultimately influence the way in which their students performed. I would argue that because the coaching in the CMEP included the examination of lesson plans, observations, and coaching conversations; the shared discussions around strengths and areas of growth was more readily able to be linked to student achievement because specific students and their actions could be identified. Furthermore, this course of action allowed the participants the opportunity to plan components of lessons with specific students in mind in order to maximize student learning. But was that enough? Just as this study was unable to conclude that the changes in the participants' planning practices influenced their instruction, few coaching studies have been able to (Kholer, Crilley, & Shearer, 2001). However, it is my belief that in order for a model of peer coaching, such as the CMEP to be fully successful it should encompass a method to examine teachers' actions and change as well as their impact on student outcomes. By performing this action, a coach would have to ground every conversation in student outcomes and adapt the coaching accordingly based on the identified gap in student learning.

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APPENDIX A
POWER POINTS FROM PROFESIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP SESSIONS



Prioritizing Standards

Targeted Coaching and Effective
Planning for Instruction
September 2011



Materials Needed

- Smartboard or Panaboard
- Notebooks for participants
- PD Worksheet for participants
- Writing utensils including red ink pens
- Timer (Optional)
- Copy of Arizona State Standards (Optional)
- Copy of Kennedy School District Curriculum Map



Objective

- Participants will be able to define prioritized standards
- Participants will be able to describe the steps necessary for prioritizing standards.
- Participants will be able to discuss the advantages of prioritizing standards

What are Prioritized Standards

- Prioritized Standards are a subset of the complete list of standards for each grade and for each subject.
- Prioritized Standards are derived from a systematic and balanced approach.
- Prioritized Standards are those standards that represent our ultimate goals for instruction.

Why Prioritized Standards

- Educators who are given no strategies for managing the volume of standards must, on their own, “pick and choose” the ones they believe will most benefit their students.
- This leads to inconsistencies as to which standards are emphasized and which are not.
- Such an approach can negatively impact student performance on high stakes assessments if the “wrong” standards are targeted.

How to prioritize standards

- 1) Select standards to prioritize
- 2) Underline nouns and verbs
- 3) Visually Organize Nouns and Verbs
- 4) Select topics or context for standards
- 5) Verify your selection with colleagues





Example 1

Students use numerical and computational concepts and procedures in a variety of situations.

- This standard has already be chosen for you as a priority.
- Together we will work through the process for prioritizing this standard.



STEP 2: Underline Nouns and Verbs

- **Students use numerical and computational concepts and procedures in a variety of situations.**



STEP 3: Visually Organize Nouns and Verbs

Nouns

- Number Sense
- Number Systems and their Properties
- Estimation

Verbs

- Use numerical concepts and procedures
- Demonstrate number sense
- Recognize number system properties
- Apply estimation
- Explain number system properties



STEP 4: Select topics or context for standards

- Variety of problem-solving situations using manipulatives.
- ?????



Example 2

- These standards are part of the Arizona State Standards and the Kennedy School District Curriculum.
- With your partner follow the process for prioritizing the standards. In this example, **choose only one of the standards to prioritize.** *Remember that prioritized standards are absolutely essential for students learning.*
- You will have 15 mins.



Example 2

- **R02-S1C6-01:** Predict what might happen next in a reading selection.
- **R02-S1C6-02:** Compare a prediction about an action or event to what actually occurred within a text.
- **R02-S2C1-01:** Describe literary elements of text including characters, plot (specific events, problem and solution) and setting.
- **R02-S1C6-04:** Relate information and events in a reading selection to life experiences and life experiences to the text.
- **R02-S2C1-02:** Describe characters (e.g., traits, roles, similarities) within a literary selection.
- **R02-S2C1-03:** Sequence a series of events in a literary selection.
- **R02-S2C1-04:** Identify cause and effect of specific events in a literary selection.
- **R02-S2C1-05:** Identify words that the author selects in a literary selection to create a graphic visual experience.
- **R02-S2C1-06:** Identify words that the author selects to create a rich auditory experience (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance, consonance) in a literary selection.
- **R02-S2C1-07:** Identify differences between fiction and nonfiction.
- **R02-S2C2-01:** Compare events, characters, and conflict in literary selections from a variety of cultures to their experiences.



STEP 1: Select standards to prioritize

R02-S2C1-01: Describe literary elements of text including characters, plot (specific events, problem and solution) and setting.



STEP 2: Underline nouns and verbs

- **R02-S2C1-01:** Describe literary elements of text including characters, plot (specific events, problem and solution) and setting.



STEP 3: Visually Organize Nouns and Verbs

Nouns

- Literary elements
- Characters
- Plot
- Events
- Problem
- Solution
- Setting
- Prediction
- Conflicts
- Fiction
- Nonfiction
- Sequence
- Cause
- Effect
- Graphic

Verbs

- Identify and describe story elements (characters, setting, problem, solution)
- Describe characters within a literary selection.
- Sequence a series of events in a literary selection.
- Relate information and events in text to life experiences.
- Compare events, characters, and conflict in literary selections.
- Identify differences between fiction and nonfiction.
- Predict what might happen next in a reading selection.
- Compare a prediction to what actually happens in a text.
- Identify cause and effect.
- Identify words that an author uses to create a graphic visual and auditory experience in a literary selection.



STEP 4: Select topics or context for standards

- The elements of literary text includes characters, plot (events, problems and solutions), and setting.



Exit Ticket

- Please complete the quiz in front of you detailing the steps for prioritizing standards.

References

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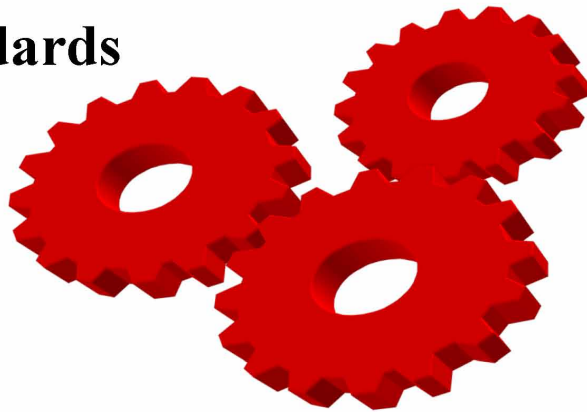


Aligned Assessments

Targeted Coaching for Effective Planning
October 2011

Standards

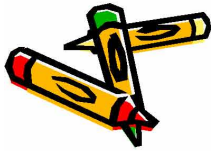
Assessment



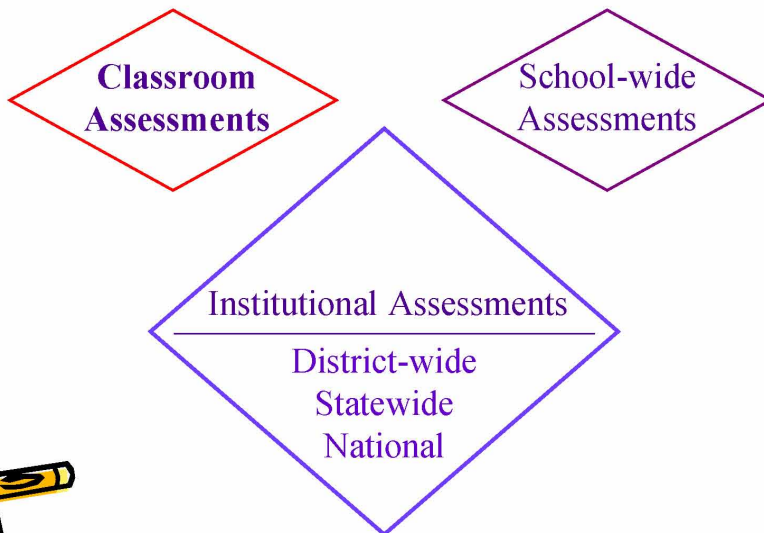
Instruction



How are Assessments related to standards and instruction?

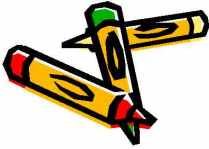


Types of Assessments



Formative Assessments

- Ongoing systematic approach used to gather information about student learning in order to provide specific feedback during the course of instruction.



Elements of Formative Assessments

- Standards-based
- Provide clear learning targets
- Identify a gap in student learning
- Provide timely feedback that easy to comprehend
- Student centered



Pros & Cons of Formative Assessments

Pros

Cons



Important considerations for creating aligned assessments

- What are the goals and/or standards that need to be measured?
- What is the learning target for this assessment?
- How will I assess the goals and/or standards?
- What method will I use to check alignment?



Example 1

Using the standard below, create one assessment with two questions that are aligned. You can refer to the important considerations for guidance.

Describe literary elements of text including characters, plot (specific events, problem and solution) and setting.



Example 2

Add three digit whole numbers



Exit Ticket

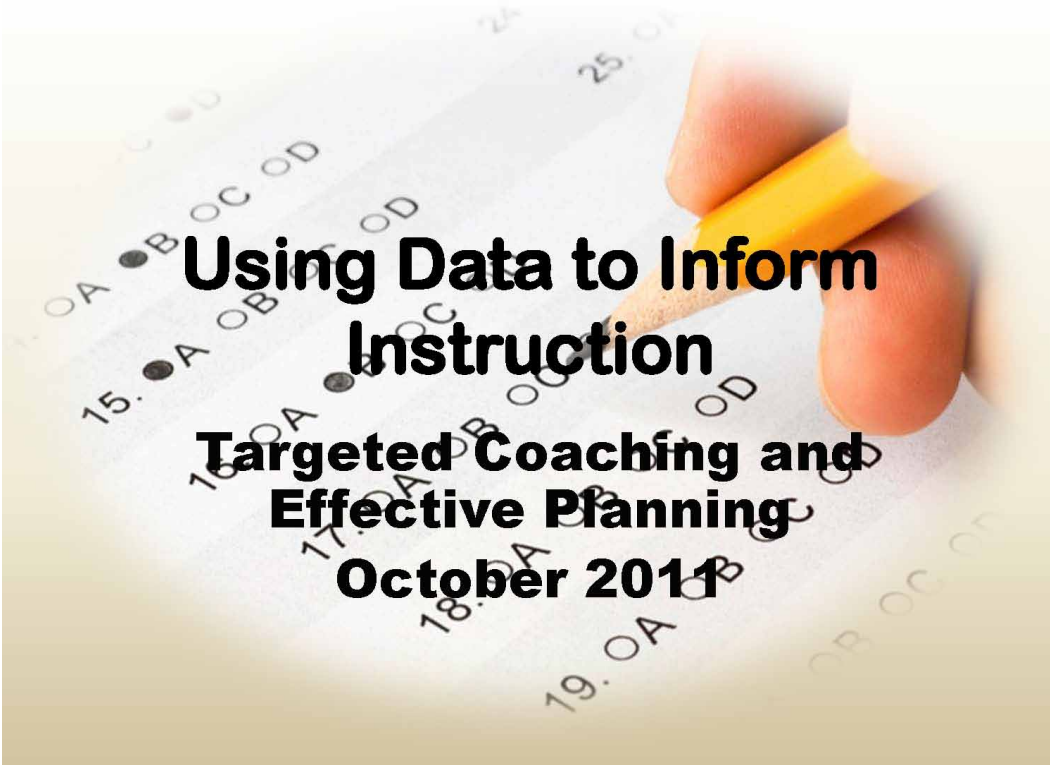
- On a loose-leaf sheet of paper, please respond to the following question.
 - What are four of the most important steps to consider in Creating Aligned Assessments?



References

- Heritage, M. (2007). Formative assessment: what do teachers need to know and do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89 (2), 140-145.
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Underlying Assumptions



- Teachers need content mastery
- Schools must ensure teachers have the resources to organize and interpret data
- Many teachers may require on-going professional development in order to create aligned assessments

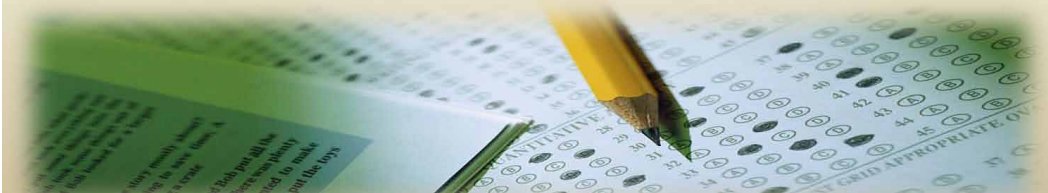
Using Data to Create Aligned Assessments

1. Identify gaps in student achievement based on assessment data.
2. Create and implement a plan to address the gaps during instruction.
 1. Direct Instruction
 2. Modeling
 3. Guided Practice with Feedback
 4. Increased Independent Practice



Your Interpretation

- Using the paper provided, work with a partner to create a visual representation of the steps involved in creating aligned assessments.



Exit Ticket

Describe a method for using assessment data to plan for instruction.

APPENDIX B
PEER COACHING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Peer Coaching and Professional Development Survey Instrument

The following are a list of questions about your perceptions of instructional planning and professional development. Read each statement and place an **X** whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), feel neutral (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD). The results from the survey will be confidential. Please complete and return to Jonathan's Mailbox by **Friday January 20, 2012.**

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I know my grade level standards					
2	I organize my standards into units					
3	I can properly sequence my standards					
4	I can identify the knowledge and skills my standards require me teach					
5	I use my standard to plan instruction					
6	I craft good questions for my students					
7	I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students					
8	I use a variety of assessment strategies					
9	I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused					
10	I can create aligned assessments based on my standards					
11	I regularly monitor student achievement data					
12	I use student achievement data to inform my instruction					

13	Professional development has met my specific needs as a teacher					
14	Professional development has been relevant to my classroom experience					
15	Professional development has helped me improve my planning skills as a teacher					
16	Professional development has caused me to collaborate with my colleagues					
17	Peer Coaching has met my specific needs as a teacher					
18	Peer Coaching has been relevant to my classroom experience					
19	Peer Coaching has given me no new knowledge or skills related to planning for instruction.					
20	Peer Coaching has given me the necessary skills and qualities needed to plan for instruction					
21	Peer Coaching has caused me to collaborate with my colleagues to plan for instruction					

The following questions require a short response.

Describe what qualities constitute effective professional development.

Describe what qualities make an effective teacher.

How would you describe yourself as a teacher?

Please answer the following demographic questions.

Gender (*Check One*) **Male** _____ **Female** _____

Total years teaching in the Roosevelt School district. _____

Total years of overall teaching experience (*Circle One*) **1 to 5** **6 to 10** **11 to 15** **16 to 20** **20 +**

What grade level do you currently teach? _____

What is your level of education. (*Circle one*) **BA/BS** **MA/MS** **MBA** **EdD/PhD**

What is your race? _____

What is overall household income? (*Circle One*) **30,000 to 40,000** **40,000 to 50,000** **50,000 to 60,000** **60,000 to 70,000** **70,000 +**

Are you a first generation college graduate? (*Check One*) Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- 1) How would you define effective instructional planning?
- 2) When do you do your planning?
- 3) How much time do you spend planning?
- 4) What resources do you use in your planning
- 5) What other factors influence your planning process?
- 6) What do your plans look like?

- 1) Does planning impact your instruction?
 - a. If so, can you provide some examples?
- 2) What instructional methods are most effective for your students? Is there one that you prefer?
- 3) What are your areas of growth regarding your instruction
- 4) What are your strengths regarding your instruction?
- 5) In what ways has Professional Development impacted your instruction?
 - a. Peer Coaching
 - i. Describe what peer coaching is to you?
 - ii. Have you read about peer coaching?
 - iii. Have you been peer coached or peer coached?
 - iv. How has this peer coaching impacted you? (Post test)

APPENDIX D
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP SERIES
EXEMPLAR RESPONSES

PD 1: Prioritizing Standards

What is the process for Prioritizing Content Standards?

1. Select standards to prioritize
2. Underline key concepts
3. Organize standards into an orderly format
4. Develop a context for your standards
5. Have your work checked by a colleague

PD 2: Aligned Assessments

What are four of the most important steps to consider in Creating Aligned Assessments?

1. What are the goals and/or standards that need to be measured?
2. What is the learning target for this assessment?
3. How will I assess the goals and/or standards?
4. What method will I use to check alignment?

PD 3: Using Data to Plan for Instruction

Describe a method for using assessment data to plan for instruction.

First you should identify gaps in achievement based on assessment data. Next you should plan to address the gaps using any of the following: direct instruction, teacher modeling, guided practice with feedback, increased independent practice

APPENDIX E
OBSERVATION ANECDOTAL RECORD

Observation Anecdotal Record

Date:

Participants:

Students:

Grade level:

Length of observation: Start:

Finish:

Time	Observation	Evidence
Notes		
Other Observations: <i>standards, objectives, goal, schedule, content, material, etc</i>		

Gonzalez (2010), *Language Policy and Access for English Learners: Pedagogy, Outcomes, and Accountability*

APPENDIX F
INSTRUCTIONAL OBSERVATION RUBRIC

CONCEPT	Primary	Intermediate	Advanced
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach	<i>Teacher effectively gauges less than 50% of students' comprehension of what is being taught.</i>	<i>Teacher effectively gauges 50-80% of students' comprehension of what is being taught.</i>	<i>Teacher effectively gauges 80% or more of students' comprehension of what is being taught.</i>
I craft good questions for my students	Teacher attempts to utilize effective questions for students.	Teacher utilizes a few effective questions for students.	<i>Teacher utilizes several effective questions for students.</i>
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students	Teacher attempts to adjust teaching to students' levels.	Teacher adjusts teaching to varying students' levels at some point in the lesson.	<i>Teacher effectively adjusts teaching to varying students' levels throughout the lesson.</i>
I use a variety of assessment strategies	Teachers attempts to use a single assessment strategy.	Teacher uses varying assessment strategies at some point in the lesson.	<i>Teacher effectively uses a variety of assessment strategies throughout the instruction.</i>
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	Teacher does not provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused.	Teacher attempts to provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused.	<i>Teacher consistently provides alternate explanations or examples when students are confused.</i>
I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom	Teacher attempts to implement alternative teaching strategies to meet students' needs.	Teacher implements alternative teaching strategies to meet most students' needs.	<i>Teacher effectively implements alternative teaching strategies to meet almost all students' needs.</i>
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards	Teacher assessments are not aligned to state standards.	Teacher assessments are aligned to portions of the state standards.	<i>Teacher assessments are appropriately aligned with all standards.</i>

APPENDIX G
PEER COACHING REFLECTIVE GUIDE

As you and the peer coach work together, use this tool to self-reflect and develop a course of action for locating resources and improving your instructional planning.

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Needs from Peer Coach	Other available options and supports
Self				
I effectively gauge student comprehension of what I teach				
I craft good questions for my students				
I adjust my teaching to the proper level for individual students				
I use a variety of assessment strategies				
I consistently provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused				

turn to next page

I effectively implement alternative teaching strategies in my classroom				
I can create aligned assessments based on my standards				
Other				
Action Plan: List 3-5 next steps you plan to implement in your instruction before the next observation and peer coaching session				

Adapted from "Striking a Balance" by M. Janas 2001. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*

APPENDIX H
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

To: Oscar Jimenez-Castellanos

From: Mark Roosa, Chair *sm*
Soc Beh IRB

Date: 08/10/2011

Committee Action: Exemption Granted

IRB Action Date: 08/10/2011

IRB Protocol #: 1108006711

Study Title: Targeted Coaching and Professional Development: A Recipe for Effective Planning

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) (2).

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.